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Annual, 1972

HORSE TALES

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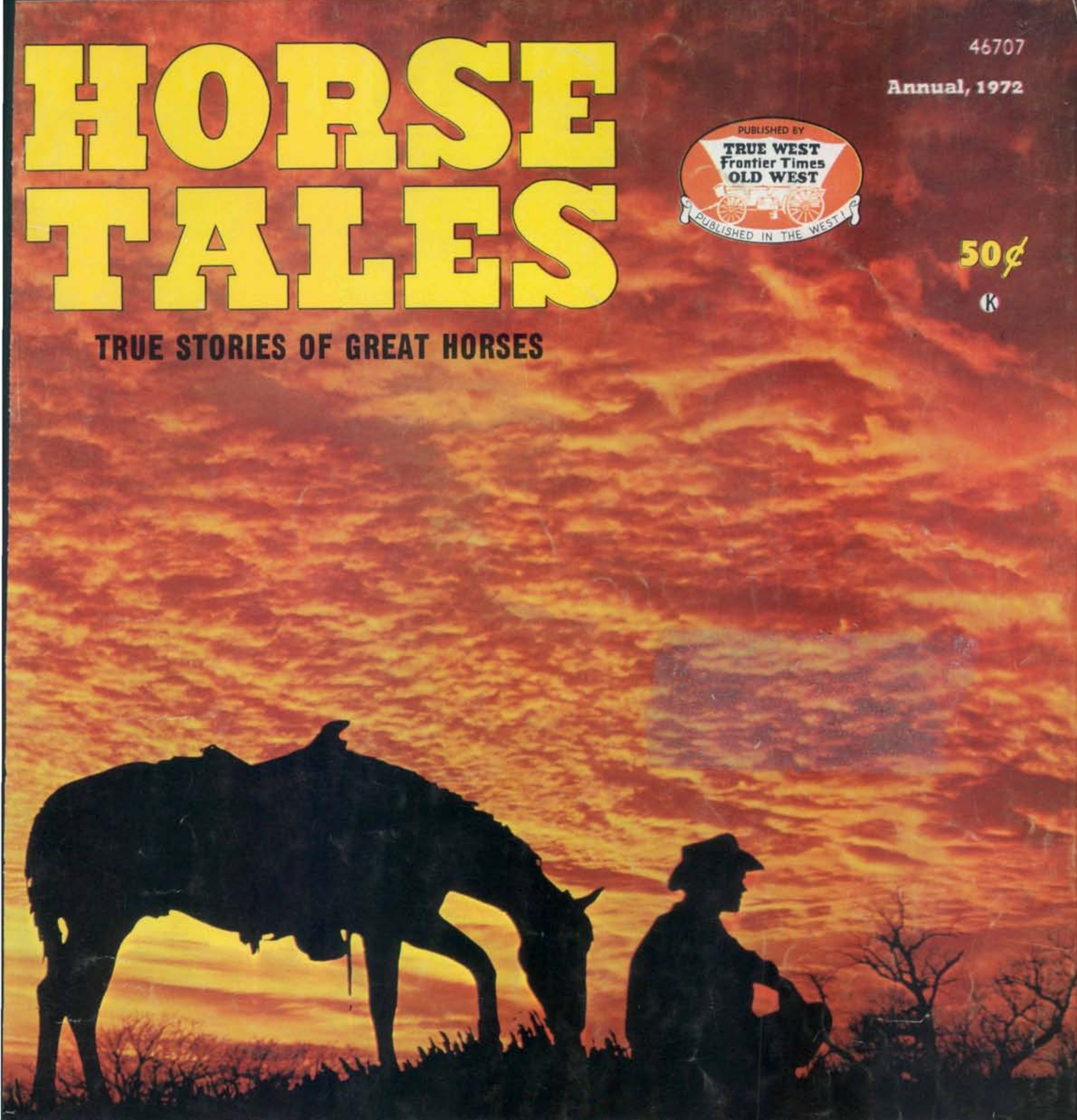

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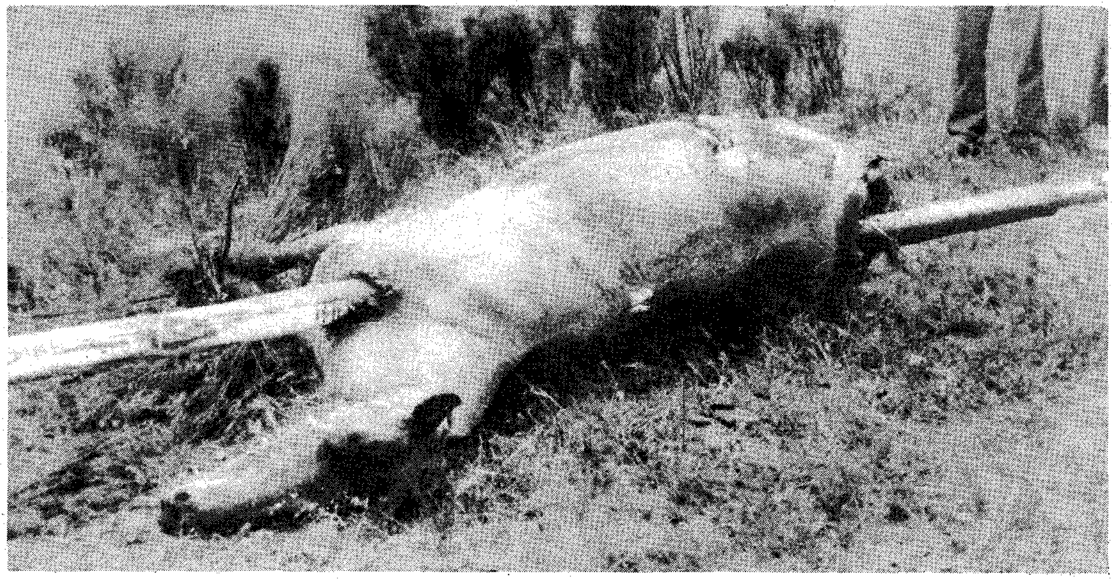
WHY ANOTHER HORSE MAGAZINE?

THERE are over fifty magazines in the horse field and it would seem that one more would be as welcome as a second dose of castor oil! In case you haven't already inhaled the drift by flipping through this first issue of the new colt in our Western Publications corral, I'll try and explain what it's all about.

The subtitle, "True Stories of Great Horses," means exactly what it says. We want to cover the life story of every great horse from here to yonder and from now to then. We'll get all the well-known names, of course, but right now I ought to say a word or two about the word "great" as used with reference to outstanding horses all over the world. Goosebumps pop out on me when I read about some of the well-known, really great horses of the past and present but I also bump out—and sometimes it turns into a light rash—when I read the story of some old horse that nobody but his owner and maybe a few folks from that part of the country know about—a horse that is so outstanding in one or more traits that he endears himself forever to the man he belongs to.



Read this editorial for the details of this bizarre accident!

For instance, if you love your horse, he is an out-of-the-ordinary horse—perhaps has even saved your life—I'm pretty sure he is classified as a "great" horse in your estimation! There are so many horses never written about that are really great in one form or another that we think the material for such a magazine is unlimited.

I know the other horse magazines run some stories of this type, but we decided to devote our *entire* magazine to such stories since the how-to, breed, instructions, and just about every other part of the field are already covered. It makes no difference, either, what the horse does. He can be a club-footed old nag from the backwoods so long as he is not an *ordinary* club-footed old nag but has pulled something outstanding at least once in his life; in short, something that will make a very interesting account. We'll use stories on racing, rodeo, any breed, any type, and stories from anywhere—although most of them will be about horses of this country, of course.

I'll bet every reader has a story of some kind that is unusual enough to be published in this magazine—BUT DON'T SEND THEM NOW! Wait until we see if this little colt stands being born and if he continues at all and starts growing, even on wobbly legs. We'll let you know soon with a second edition and that is when we'll start asking for stories.

In a way, this is a new field for us even though we have been publishing stories about horses in our three Western Americana magazines—TRUE WEST, FRONTIER TIMES and OLD WEST—since 1953. Fact is, so many of our readers have asked for more horse stories for so long that we decided to give them the whole package. Ever since we've been in the publishing business, letters have come in suggesting that we print more Indian stories, or more ghost town stories, or homesteading stories, badman, treasure, etc. Of course, along with these, came letters asking why we don't *quit* printing so many Indian stories, ghost town stories, homesteading stories, badman, treasure, etc. It sure didn't come as a bright-eyed surprise to us that you readers have your druthers. The trouble for us is that we have to tread a shade easy on which druthers you'd druther have. All this interest in particularized facets of the West finally nudged us to try a few of these specialized magazines in addition to putting

(Continued on page 64)

ORSE
ALES

A JOE SMALL PUBLICATION

TRUE STORIES OF GREAT HORSES

-JOE AUSTELL SMALL
irector—PAT WAGNER
—BILL SEYMOUR

VOL. 1, NO. 1
ANNUAL, 1972

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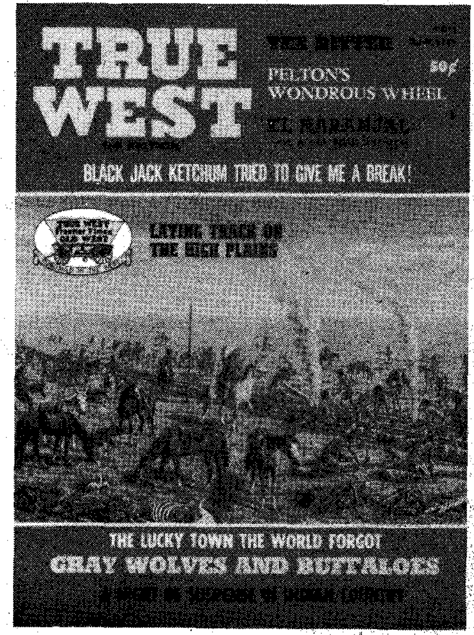
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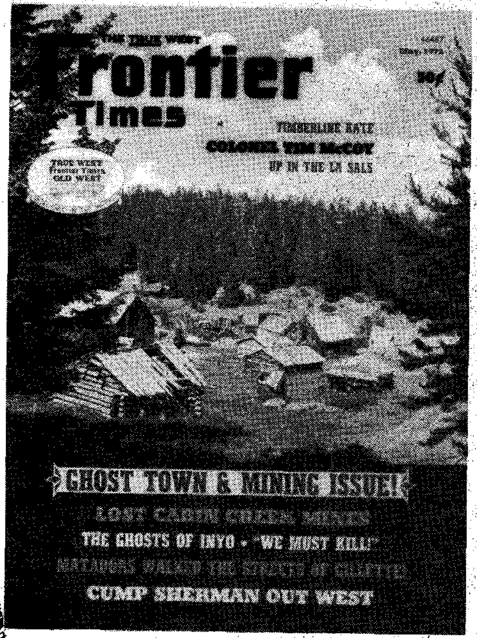
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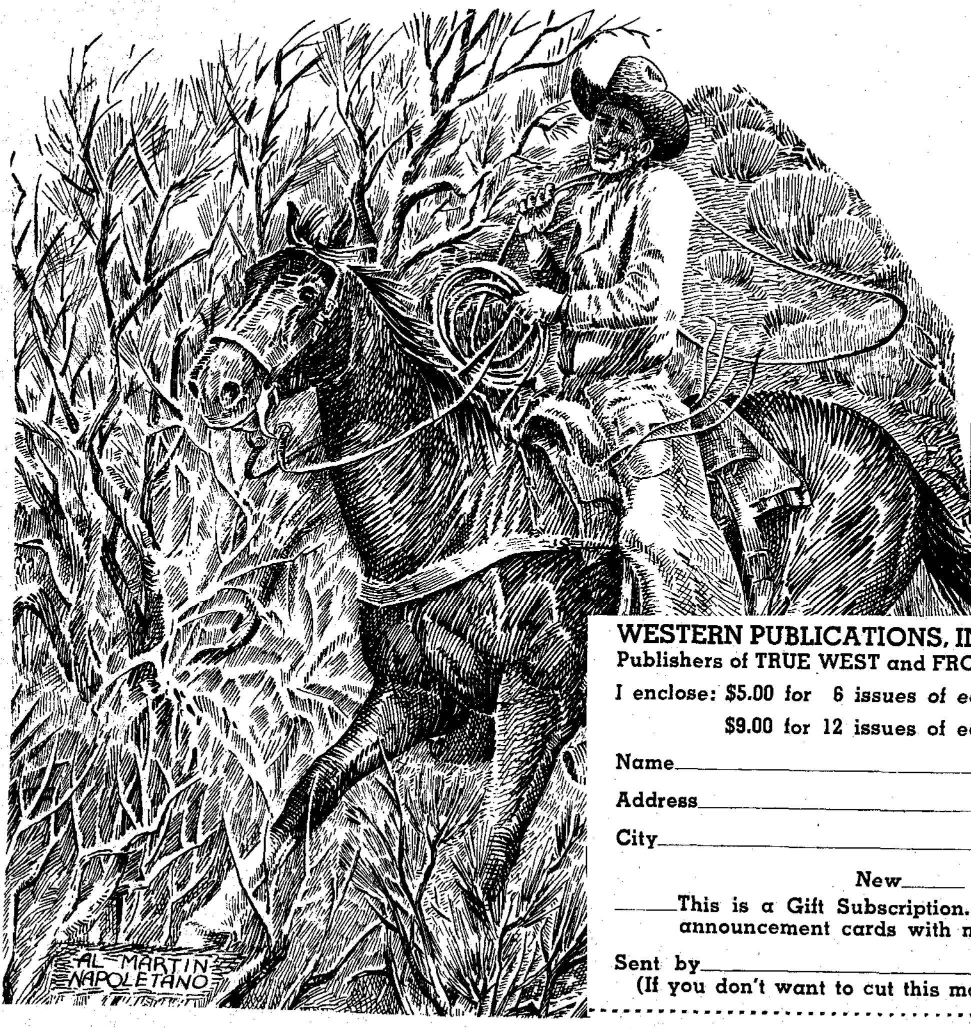
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Comanches and Thei

THE COMANCHES were never among the missionized. By the opening of the eighteenth century, the breeding grounds of Spanish horses had drawn them far south of their accustomed range between the Platte and the Yellowstone. They rode from the Rocky Mountains in Colorado to Natchitoches in Louisiana and from the Arkansas to the lower reaches of the Rio Grande. If in the beginning they traded a few "buffalo mantles" for horses, they soon began taking them with less cost and more pleasurable excitement. They regarded themselves as a nation like Mexico and the United States, and the Spaniards so regarded them. In an official report in 1770, de Méziéres, the competent Frenchman who served the Spaniards as Indian agent over the Louisiana Territory, said: "They compare their number to that of the stars. They are so skilled in horsemanship that they have no equal, so daring that they never ask for or grant truces." They despised as slaves all *Indios reducidos* and even those who traded with the Spaniards.

In 1779 Governor Anza of New Mexico made an expedition against the Comanches and in one engagement captured "more than five hundred horses." The Comanches retaliated and, according to Zebulon Pike, drove away 2,000 New Mexican horses. But for American aggressiveness, the Comanches to this day would be holding Mexico from expanding plainsward. They had transportation and arms; they held invasion-swallowing space.

The only reason, the Comanches boasted, that they allowed Spaniards to remain in New Mexico, Texas, and northern Mexico was to raise horses for them. Pawnees and other strongly mounted tribes called them "*the* Horse Indians."

During most of the seventeenth century and on past the middle of the nineteenth, the Comanches, with the Lipans and other lesser tribes, stole horses by the droves from every outpost planted by the Spaniards from the Louisiana line to the upper Rio Grande.

At one time the Spanish government considered paying the Comanches a kind of Danegelt as protection against raids, but never got beyond doling out tobacco and *eslabones*—pieces of steel for striking fire out of flint. By forbidding all trade with the French, the Spanish government stringhaltered its colonists and promoted wholesale horse-stealing.

The official records of San Antonio de Bexar during a thirty-day period in the year 1774 illustrate the brazen horse-thieving of the "Nations of the North"—mainly the Comanches. On January 11, a citizen who had ridden west a few miles was robbed of his horses. On January 13, word reached San Antonio that a party traveling south to Mexico had been killed on the Nueces River, their horses taken of course. On January 14, men out killing cattle for beef were set on and forced to abandon their horses. On the same day a band of Indians drove away two stallion-guarded bands of mares owned by a ranchero of La Bahia (Goliad) down the San Antonio River. Two days later, Indians took a *mulada*—drove of mules—from the same neighborhood. On February 5, Indians stampeded the presidio's horse herd and got away with 300 head out of 400. Pursuit of them as far as the San Saba River resulted in exhaustion of the inferior horses left to the military. While the Spanish captain and his company rode back to San Antonio, they left their tired remuda—the remounts—to be trailed in slowly by a corporal's guard. The Indians took these horses. The raiders did not leave the country; they entered the presidio daily "as friends." The military were afraid to punish them.

In 1766 a world traveler who signed his name Monsieur de Pagés rode into San Antonio just as raiders drove off 400 horses. "The alarm being given, the

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garrison beat to arms and, mounting their horses, pursued to the distance of a 100 leagues."

At the Guadalupe River on their way down the hill, the garrison troops were ambushed and lost "150 horses." A few days later a detachment of tribesmen "insulted them again and the governor began to see the necessity of putting the fort in a better state of defense. . . .The whole affair ended in a pitiful little skirmish."

One final representative episode, from the reminiscences of an early-day San Antonian. In the year 1813, about 1,500 Comanches presented themselves before the vice-governor demanding *un regalo*—a gift. He told them to go on down the river to Goliad, where Governor Manuel Salcedo was opposing Magee's army of filibusters out of Louisiana. The Comanches rode on, found the governor, and asked him for *un regalo*. He replied that all he had to give was powder and lead and that he would furnish them to fight against the American filibusters. The Comanches said they did "not care to be killed." Here was their ultimatum: unless *un regalo* came forth, they would destroy all the ranches on the San Antonio River and drive away all the horses. They seemed, however, in no hurry for a reply and settled down in their camps. Governor Salcedo dispatched a courier to San Antonio ordering all horses driven into stockades and guards posted. "About 7,000 horses were gathered nightly into San Antonio, sixty men herding them by day." This is too many horses, but exaggeration is an unvarying means for being interesting. At the end of "fifteen days"—which is the Mexican addition of the days comprising two weeks—the Comanches "took the horses all away." Two years later the military in San Antonio did not have a single horse. Five years later there were so few horses to be obtained from the San Antonio stock-raisers that the Comanches entered into "a kind of peace" and sold them "some of their own horses."

As any examiner of the Bexar archives may see, even when the Spanish garrisons had a supply of horses, they were so weak from being close-herded on overgrazed land and from being penned up constantly that they were incapable of effective service. The Indians moved camp often to fresh grass, but the garrisons were fixed. Some day some historian of Spanish America may graduate from the recording of facts to fulfil Emerson's definition of scholar as "Man-Thinking." If so, he will explain the melting away of the enfervored vigor of the Cortés-Coronado conquerors into ineffectual defense and parochial intolerance. The base of the decay was an iron band around every orthodox Spaniard's brain that shut in superstitions and shut out the expansiveness that freedom of thought and desire for freedom for others give.

BEFORE THE Mexican War took the United States across the Plains there was little conflict between Americans and Comanches. Indeed, the American government was at times ammunitioning Comanches against Spaniards and Mexicans. Thus in 1847, the Osage agency traded powder, lead, firearms, and other goods to the Comanches for 1,500 mules. Long before this the Comanches had become hostile toward the encroaching *Tejanos*, whom they differentiated from other Americans—a differentiation still pleasing to Texans. A few old ones can remember when the full moon of each month was called the "Comanche moon," and there was a song:

Oh pray for the ranger, you kind-hearted stranger.
He has roamed the prairies for many a year;
He has kept the Comanches from off your ranches,

(Continued on page 48)

No doubt about it, this was the

world's weirdest rodeo

By SWEDE ANDERSON, as told to Norman B. Wiltsey

Photos from DeVere Helfrich

AMERICAN COWBOYS were not as popular as at present with the English public back in 1924, when Tex Austen took a full-scale rodeo outfit abroad. The skeptical Londoners sat on their hands all through the first performance, glumly refusing to applaud the spectacular exhibition of wild horse riding and steer bulldogging unveiled for their amusement. In those days there weren't any funny rodeo clowns to thaw out a "cold" audience, and the Britishers remained frozen-faced and apathetic through the fanciest stunts of Austen's best riders. Obviously they believed the entire show was a fake, and they refused to be suckers for the Americans and applaud a bunch of phony performers and horses trained to act like unbroken devils. That's the way they had it figured, anyhow.

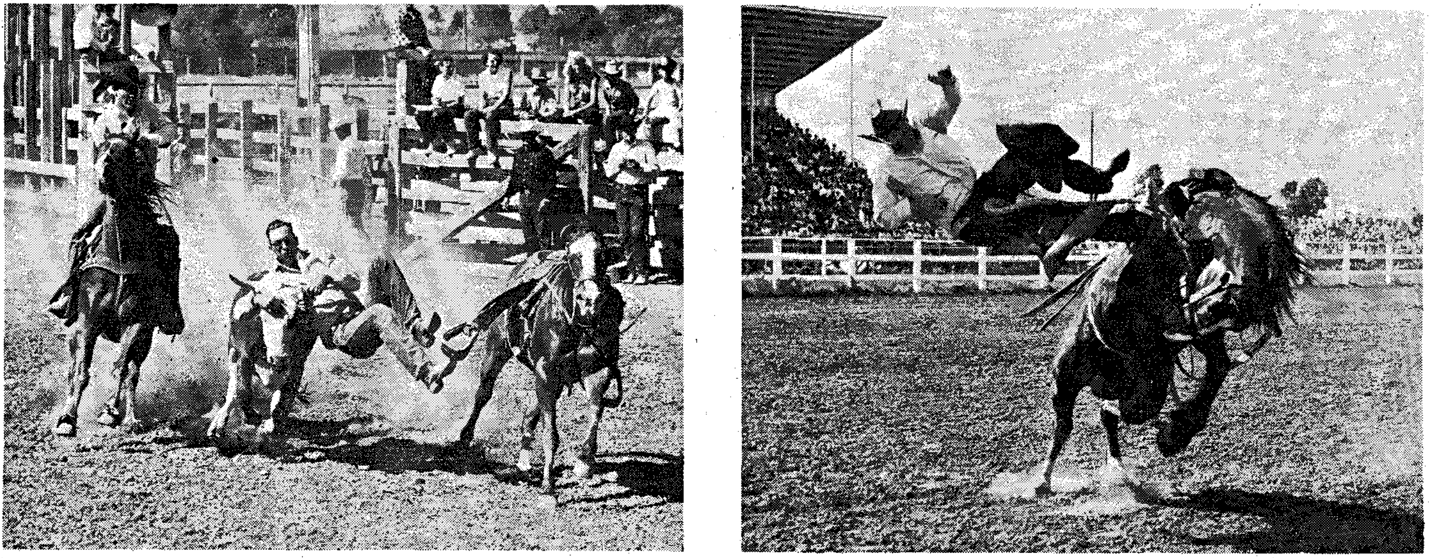
Surprised and disappointed by the scoffing, chilly reception accorded his first show, promoter Tex was stumped to dope out something to save his outfit from financial ruin. They were better than 4,000 miles from home, and Tex's bankroll had been stretched almost to the last dollar to get them to England. Tex had to come up with some solution that would loosen up the hostile spectators. He had to come up with it *fast,* because there were fewer spectators for the second show and only a handful for the third.

At this crucial point, a wizened, sharp-featured little Cockney steeplechase rider named Clarence "Cocky" Thompson arrived in Tex's office at the London arena, loudly demanding a "chawnce" to ride one of Austen's "blinkin' h'outlaw 'orses" and show it up as a fake. In addition to this, Cocky offered to bet fifty pounds that he could do it! Carefully concealing his delight at meeting up with a pigeon, Tex allowed as how he could oblige. The cagey promoter, mindful of possible future lawsuits, also stipulated that Cocky sign a statement saying that he rode the horse against the advice of promoter Austen, and therefore would not attempt to seek damage in the event of injury.

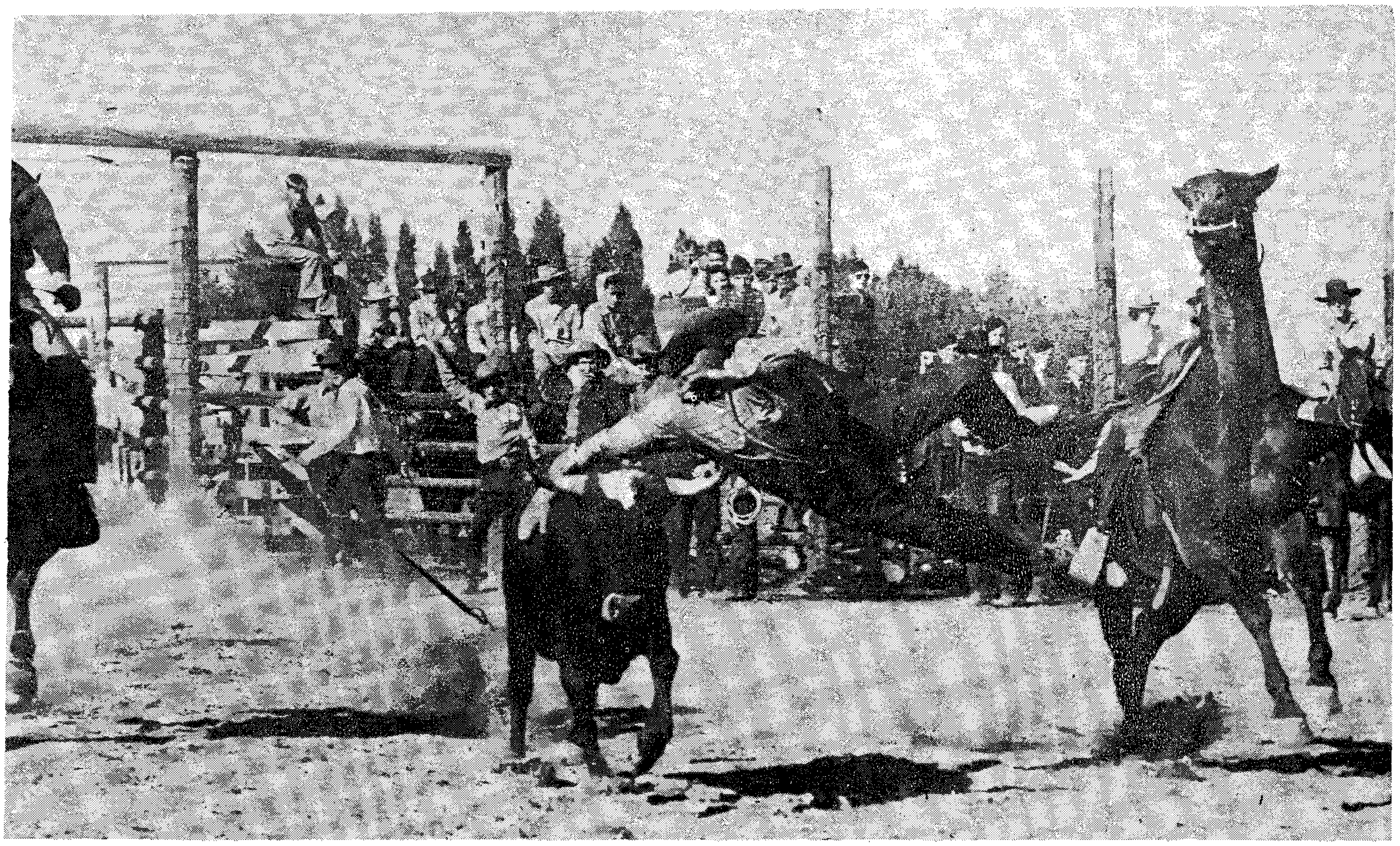
Sneering his scorn of this "Yankee trick"—old Tex damned near swallowed his cigar at being called a Yankee—Thompson signed the statement before witnesses. Passing the hat among the boys, Tex could get up only forty pounds—about $200 at the current exchange—to bet against Cocky at even money. The strutting little jock considered this defection as supreme proof that the "bloody h'Americans" were "twisters"—definitely not on the level. In three minutes flat, the Cockney steeplechaser made himself as unpopular as a sidewinder with Austen's whole crew. Still, the little feller seemed to have courage, and the boys admired guts.

George Nelson bulldogging a steer at Redmond, Oregon, in 1944. This is the type of rugged competition skeptical Londoners regarded as phony before Mike Hastings set them right.

COCKY went on in the next day's show, after a proper ballyhoo buildup by the announcer. The wiry little Englishman drew a wall-eyed dun named Deerfoot for his mount—and it is to the everlasting credit of Tex Austen that he gave the aggravating Britisher a fair shake for his life and his money. Deerfoot was not the toughest nor yet the softest of the outfit's picked string of "widow-makers"; as rodeo buckers go, he rated just about average. He knew all the tricks, but lacked the power and savage determination of the real top-notchers. Sly Deerfoot would try one



Above left: Lex Connelly wrestling a tough one at Klamath Falls, Oregon, in 1953. Above right: George Williams being bucked off Pop Corn at Red Bluff, California, 1953. Rodeo rules have changed since Tex Austen's invasion of England in 1924, but the broncs are just as tough and the ground just as solid when you light.



tactic a few times, and if it failed try another. If two or three maneuvers failed in a row, the dun would wisely conclude that he was topped by an experienced bronc-twister and quit trying. Tex was gambling that Deerfoot was good enough to dump the swaggering Cockney, but not quite good enough to break his fool neck. In Tex's book it figured a fair even money bet.

Still suspicious of Yankee skullduggery, Cocky supervised the saddling of Deerfoot himself. He squawked himself purple at using the unfamiliar Western saddle, but finally mounted while Deerfoot—held fast by two grinning cowboys—wound up like a coiling steel spring beneath him. "Blimey," crowed Cocky when he was settled in the stirrups, "h'open the gate and turn the blighter loose!"

The chute gate swung wide, and Deerfoot lunged through the opening into the arena and went to work.

The dun's first vicious jump and jarring descent almost piled Thompson, but the little jock was a professional rider and he stayed aboard. He knew he had only to top this equine lightning bolt ten seconds to collect forty pounds—and that was jolly better pay for less time up than he'd ever earned for steeplechasing. For forty pounds he'd give Pegasus himself a go!

The second straight buck and piledriver return to earth nearly snapped poor Cocky's head off. A shrewd one, Thompson learned in a flash the bronc-buster's trick of rising in his stirrups a split-second before impact and taking the landing shock "on his feet." Blood gleamed brightly at Cocky's nostrils, but he stuck gamely to the whip-snapping saddle. In the stands, the indifferent spectators suddenly came alive and stood up yelling madly. Even Tex and his boys, forgetful of the precious $200 they had riding on Deerfoot, whooped encouragement to the brave Cockney.

Seemed almost like Cocky had it made—and then Deerfoot, in a fiendish switch of tactics, quit straight bucking and went to swapping ends. That did it. Dazed and sick from three whirlwind spins in succession, the battered jock was utterly unprepared for the twisting sunfish that instantly followed. Mouth wide and gasping, his peaked face a ghastly greenish-white from nausea, Thompson flew off headfirst at the top of the jump to light squarely on his over-sized, bleeding nose in the hoof-cut turf.

Time: seven seconds.

Cocky got to his feet to thunderous applause and walked off the field under his own power, though he was groggy and staggered drunkenly. "The whole bloomin' plyce keeps 'oppin' up and smackin' me in the phiz," groaned the mauled little man to the pick-up rider, who leaned from his horse to steady Thompson with a friendly hand on his shoulder.

"Ah know jest how you feel," sympathized the lanky cowboy. "Ah been right where you are, a-goddam many a time. Only thing that h'eps is to th'ow up, and then lay down som'eres and sleep it off. Man, Ah *know*!"

Cocky nodded his head miserably, holding a red-sopping handkerchief to his gory beak. He reeled under the stands, promptly vomited, collapsed in a dark corner and closed his eyes to shut out the cruelly spinning universe.

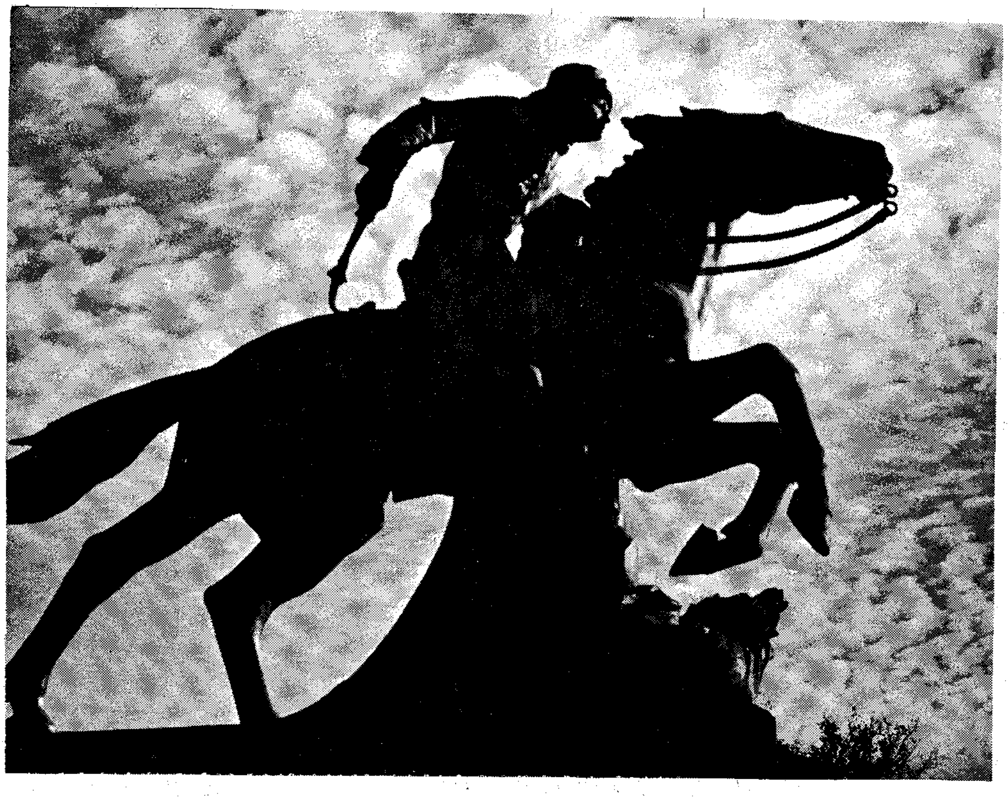
AFTER Cocky Thompson's gallant defeat by Deerfoot, there were no more harsh British aspersions on the caliber of the American bucking horses. The little gamester had proved their class the hard way, and nobody could doubt the evidence written on Cocky's face. Certain newspaper writers, however, still sniped at the show's bulldogging exhibitions. The implication was that the American steers were tame old barnyard beasts which had to be teased and prodded into putting on an act. Tex raged at this ridiculous accusation, wondering how in the hell he could disprove it. Again, almost as if on cue, something happened to straighten things out.

A Scotch nobleman, who owned a big cattle spread in his own country, stood up in his front-row box one afternoon and loudly and publicly challenged the Americans to bulldog a steer from his own Highland pastures. Tex escorted the Scotsman into his private office and discovered to his amazement that the gent wasn't *loco* and meant every word he said. The wealthy Scot stated his wish to back his animal against any bulldogger in Tex's outfit for any amount desired by the American "sportsman." Poker-faced, though privately wondering how one man could get so lucky, Tex accepted the challenge and again passed his Stetson among the boys for cash contributions to the betting fund. The nobleman was quickly covered for a hundred pounds, and the "match" was set for an early show. The canny Scot had brought his wildest steer along with him on the train from Scotland just to challenge the American invaders.

The bulldoggers were so tickled to get a crack at the Scotch steer they insisted on drawing lots for the opportunity. Mike Hastings, a rugged rodeo veteran from the Texas Panhandle, pulled the lucky slip amid envious yips from his mates. "If Ah cain't flop this Scotch critter *muy pronto,* Ah'll git me a pretty l'il English gal an' settle down ovah heah!" grinned Mike. The boys whooped derisively at this. Mike already had a missus and three knot-head young'uns back home in Texas.

Looking over the "Scotch critter" in the chute before going on, Mike got to wondering if mebbe he wasn't so damn lucky after all. This steer sure was the wildest lookin' beast he'd ever clapped eyes on outside a nightmare. Lean, shag-

(Continued on page 10)



Pony Express statue at St. Joseph, Missouri, that dramatically depicts the daring and imaginative innovation of three St. Joe businessmen.

The exciting story of the "Mochila Mail." A brief but thrilling chapter in the history of transportation in the Far West—the rise and fall of the

PONY EXPRESS

By LESLIE G. KENNON

I TELL you it won't work! Absurd idea—a bunch of riders carrying mail across country wild and unsettled, across Indian territory, using unmapped trails and depending upon a string of outposts from Missouri to California. It would *never* work!"

Alexander Majors stared at his impractical partner, considering that he must have lost his mind to even envision such a wild scheme as a "Pony Express" in this year of 1860. Majors knew that William H. Russell had always been a visionary. His other partner, W. B. Waddell, simply wasn't a businessman. It was he, Alexander Majors, who carried the burden of making the firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell an economic success. The going was rough sometimes—especially when Russell came up with one of his crackpot schemes to make a fortune. Such as now.

Waddell, as usual, kept out of the argument. He was content to go along with whatever Majors and Russell decided. His tactics had paid off. With little effort on his part, he had already amassed a considerable fortune.

"I tell *you,* Majors," roared Russell, "it *will* work! Right now Congress is in a hot debate over the routing of mail. A fast mail route is vital to both the North and the South. The Free Staters don't like the Butterfield route. Why, man, if we play our cards right, we've got a gold mine in this Pony Express! Top men in Congress have asked me to go through with it. Senator Gwin in California told me the Governor would go along with us one hundred percent, and he assured us of their backing on the floor of Congress."

Majors snorted. *"Backing!* How much *cash* did he say they'd put up?"

"I don't mean backing in money. Damn it, Majors, can't you understand there are some things more important than money?"

"Name one. I notice that *you* seem to enjoy living well."

The argument continued and, as it developed, the only thing that sold Majors on the idea of the Pony Express was the fact that Russell had already promised Senator Gwin that he would do it. Congress had been notified of the plan.

Majors was not a man to back down on any promise made by his firm, even if made by a "half-witted" partner who couldn't see the dangers involved. Quite possibly, his decision was strongly influenced by the fact that a Government contract for carrying the mails was practically assured.

Conflict between Majors and Russell was inevitable, due to their dissimilar backgrounds. (Waddell, the third partner, was of small importance, and so little information about him is on record.)

WILLIAM HEPBURN RUSSELL was born January 31, 1812, in Burlington, Vermont, the son of William Eaton and Myrtilla Hepburn Russell. His father was a soldier in the war of 1812, who died two years after the start of hostilities. His mother then married a Colonel Bangs, and the family moved to Missouri. At this time, Missouri was the outpost of Western expansion; still wild but rapidly becoming civilized to a degree where it later became known as "The Mother of the West."

To this changing land of diversified interests and viewpoints came William H. Russell as a sensitive, emotional boy. He began work at sixteen as a clerk, later becoming a merchant and finally partner in a bank at Richmond, Missouri.

On June 9, 1835, he married Harriet Elliott Warder, a preacher's daughter, and by the late forties was engaged in freighting on Government contracts.

Alexander Majors was born October 4, 1814, near Franklin in Simpson County, Kentucky, the son of Laurania (Kelly) and Benjamin Majors, a native of North Carolina.

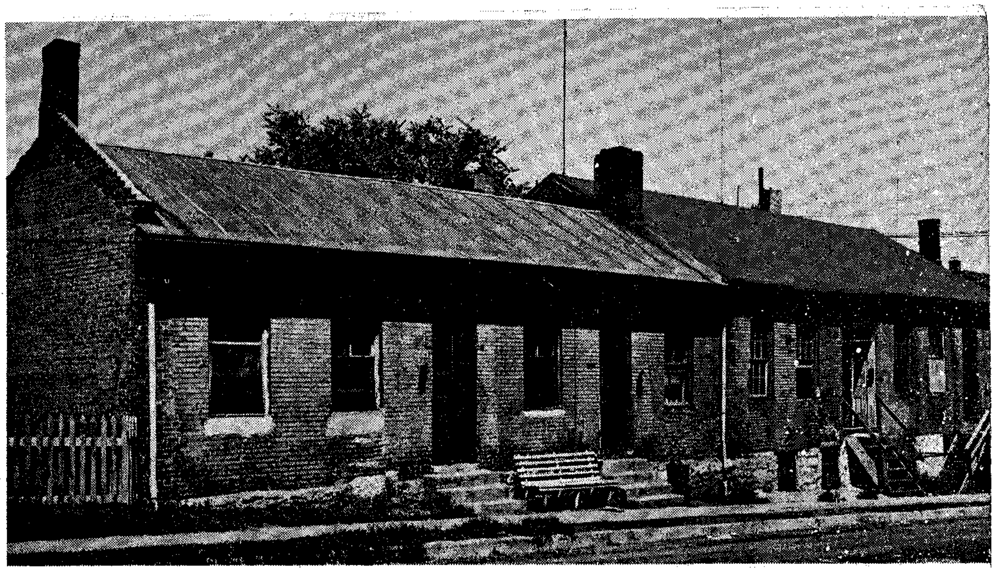
The family moved to what is now Lafayette County, Missouri, in 1819. They acquired an extensive farm, with saw and flour mills, in Jackson County, living there from 1825 to 1858.

Alexander worked on the farm and as a miller's boy. On November 6, 1834, he married Katherine Stallcup, and the young couple began farming on their own. At this time, Majors was having a struggle reconciling his deep religious convictions with a keen, practical business sense. In this he was successful.

In August of 1848, Majors undertook the carrying of freight from Independence to Santa Fe with an outfit of six wagons and teams. His first trip, completed in ninety-two days, cleared $1,500. Majors was perhaps the oddest boss freighter ever to ply the storied Santa Fe Trail. He refused to work on Sunday and made his men pledge—as he later made his Pony Express riders pledge—not to cuss, drink, gamble, treat animals cruelly or do "anything else that is incompatible with the conduct of a gentleman." He paid good wages, otherwise it is to be feared he would have had difficulty hiring a crew.

RUSSELL joined Majors and W. B. Waddell in a freighting partnership December 28, 1854, with an operating center at Leavenworth, Kansas. Four years later the partnership became the firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell.

Business grew rapidly under Majors' shrewd management. He took full responsibility for all the business on the roads, while Russell and Waddell financed and purchased.



This is St. Joseph's "Robidoux Row," site of Robidoux's Trading Post in Missouri. The trading post was the original settlement of what became St. Joseph, Missouri, in 1843.

Majors hired more than 4,000 men and used 40,000 oxen and 1,000 mules. Shipments traveled in trains of about twenty-five wagons each, with stations several miles apart—a system later used in the Pony Express. Each wagon had twelve oxen and a teamster; and each train had thirty oxen in reserve, five mules, a wagon master and some extra men.

The profits of the ambitious venture in 1855-56 were $300,000. In 1857 the firm's operations were expanded when a contract was obtained for supplying the Army ordered to Utah.

In May, 1859, Russell and a John S. Jones opened a stage line from Leavenworth to Denver, which was taken over by the firm within a year. In February, 1860, the Central Overland and Pike's Peak Express company was chartered with Russell as president. The line ran first-class coaches through to California. Mail required twenty-three days for the journey from St. Louis to San Francisco.

St. Joseph itself, in the days prior to the Pony Express, was a transportation center. The town had been named for the patron saint of Joseph Robidoux, who as early as 1803 had traded with the Indians at Blacksnake Hills. The name was changed from Robidoux's Trading Post to St. Joseph in 1843.

The Pony Express was ready to go within sixty days after the decision was made.

It was, all things considered, a masterpiece of organization. And it is significant that in all the mails carried by Pony Express only one pouch was lost. In another case of lost mail, the rider was waylaid and murdered but the mail was found intact and promptly delivered. In later days, riders went only ten or twelve miles before changing horses (which they did in two minutes or less) due to the closeness of the stations. Mail traveled from Washington, D.C. to San Francisco—an airline distance of 3,500 miles—in only fourteen days. This was an average speed of 250 miles a day, by steamboat, railroad, magnetic telegraph and horse-flesh.

The *San Francisco Herald* stated on April 16, 1860: "The Pony Express has performed a feat which excites the wonder and admiration of all."

The restriction placed on riders—other than the strict moral ones imposed by Majors—was great. All the riders chosen were small but sinewy; probably none weighed over 135 pounds and many little more than a hundred. Riders and other employees of the firm received wages of from forty to one hundred and fifty dollars a month and were housed and fed at company expense.

Saddles were specially designed, hybrids of the "Western" and jockey types, lightweight with saddle horns and cantles for comfort in riding long distances. They were only about a third the weight of the saddles of the *vaqueros,* the type then generally used in California. Most of these special saddles were made by Israel Landis' famous saddlery in St. Louis.

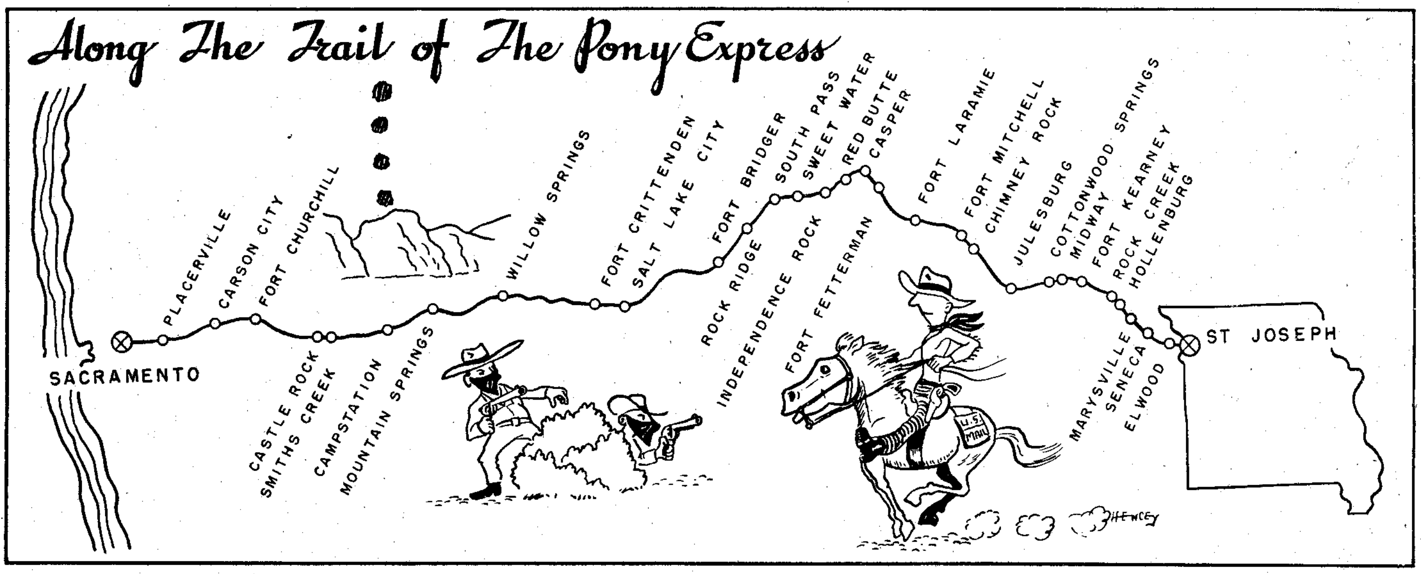
An interesting feature was the *mochila,* or leather blanket, thrown over the saddle, with holes for the horn and cantle. Ordinary mail pouches, those used for regular mail, were much too awkward and cumbersome to be used for the new service. Specially made *mochilas,* adapted from the Spanish, were made with four *cantinas,* locked pockets of leather, fastened to the *mochila* and lined with oilskin to protect the precious mail from the sweat of the animal, from the rain and snow, or from streams, should a rider be forced to swim his mount. As the rider straddled his horse, there was a pocket in front of and behind each thigh. Only the agents at either end of the line, and specially designated officials, had keys to these locked pockets, but the "way" pocket was left open for messages taken or delivered along the route and for the waybill on which the name of the station and time of arrival and departure were to be written.

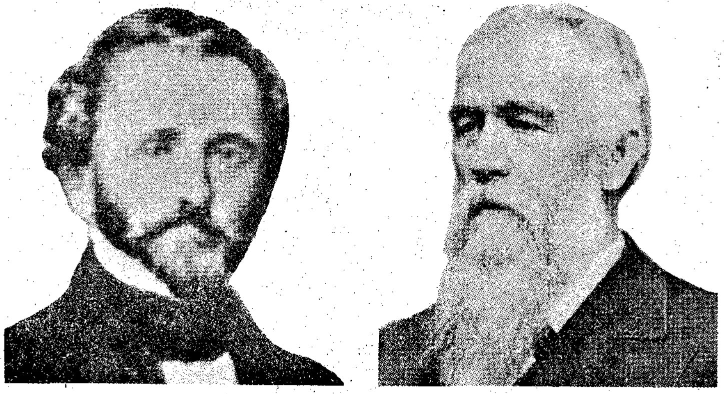
The route was across Kansas into Nebraska near Rock Creek and on to Fort Kearney by way of Thirty-two Mile Creek, following the Platte for some distance, thence northwest to Fort Laramie.

Riders crossed the foothills at the base of the Rockies at South Pass, went on to Fort Bridger, Salt Lake City, Carson City, Placerville, Folsom and Sacramento. From there the mail traveled by fast boat to San Francisco.

THERE are many fabulous and fascinating stories connected with riders of the Express. Jack H. Keetley, the "joyous jockey" who operated on the route out of St. Joe, in payment of a bet once rode 340 miles without rest. Jack claimed that Alex Carlisle was the first to carry the mail out of St. Joe, though claims are registered for several others; the most often mentioned being Johnny Frey.

In Nevada during 1860, a pony galloped into a way station with the rider slumped over the saddle horn, his lifeless body pierced by several arrows. So tight was the clutch of his hand that the pony's mane had to be cut from his grasp. The gallant mount had carried on, bringing the mail through safely.





William H. Russell (left) and Alexander Majors, the two moving forces behind the founding of the imaginative Pony Express.

"Pony Bob" Haslam, carrying the news of Lincoln's election, was attacked by Indians, but reached his relief station after a remarkable ride of 120 miles in eight hours, his jaw shattered by an arrow and his left arm badly wounded. Not long after this harrowing experience, Bob was back carrying the mail.

The distance regularly covered by a Pony Express rider ranged from thirty-five to seventy-five miles a day, depending on the terrain he covered. Speed, come hell or high water, had to average nine miles per hour; but delays caused by blizzards, torrential rains, excessive darkness, exhausting summer heat and unforseen accidents, had to be reckoned with. Some outstanding riders averaged twenty miles per hour, but the overall average was right at the scheduled figure.

Every American boy in those days wanted to be a Pony Express rider. The number first assigned to this dangerous but highly exciting job was eighty. They were the pick of the crop; boys in their 'teens, dependable, strong, courageous, and astonishingly agile and accomplished horsemen. What they lacked in years and experience they made up in sheer nerve and physical stamina.

The financial loss to the partners was immediate and great, however. The founders had invested $100,000 originally, and $30,000 a month were required for operating expenses. Indian damage alone cost $75,000 in the first three months.

Often Express riders were able to outdistance hostile Indians on their fleet ponies, but many men were killed while carrying the mails or at the stations, which were under frequent attack.

The Pony Express was vital to rapid communication of messages at its inception. Large Eastern newspapers maintained correspondents in St. Louis to wire the news from the West as it came in via Pony Express. Western papers often headed items: "We hear from Pony Express . . ."

William M. Finney, general agent for the firm, posted bills advertising "Pony Express, eight days from San Francisco to New York. The Pony Express of the Central Overland California and Pike's Peak Express Company will leave San Francisco for New York and intermediate points on Friday, 20th of April, 1860, and on every Friday thereafter at 4 o'clock p. m. Schedule time from San Francisco to New York for telegraphic dispatches, eight days; for letters twelve days. N.B.—The public will understand that by telegraphing to Carson City, 27½ hours later intelligence (news, messages, etc.) can be sent to St. Joseph, Missouri, than by letter to San Francisco." (Actual copy of poster.)

AT the inception of the famous mail service, the Hannibal and St. Joseph railroad carried tissue mail destined for the Pony Express' first run on April 3, 1860. Addison Clark, the road's top engineer, was told to "make a record that will stand for thirty years."

The route was dangerous and the road-bed not seasoned. Rails were light in those days and curves and grades not standardized. Yet the 206-mile run was covered at an average speed of fifty miles an hour and the mail arrived at St. Joseph in time for the Pony Express to depart on schedule.

The first mail carried between sixty and eighty pieces, including a message from President Buchanan to the Governor of California which had been telegraphed as far as St. Joseph. Later, the new service was to carry such important news as Lincoln's Inaugural Address, the fall of Fort Sumter, the call for troops at the start of the Civil War, and the bloody battle of Antietam.

On that first historic run, over 1900 miles of rough terrain, the eastbound mail came to St. Joseph in nine days, twenty-three hours, and the westbound was delivered in eleven days, twelve hours.

The Pony Express required 190 relay stations (one of which still stands unaltered at the Hollenberg ranchhouse near Hanover, Kansas), 420 horses and 400 station-keepers. Until stations could be built at points between runs, tent shelters for horses and men were erected each twelve to fifteen miles. Farther on, the distance between stops was often more than twenty-five miles.

The initial letter rate was five dollars per half-ounce in gold, later reduced to one dollar. Mail was limited to letters and telegrams, all to be written on tissue paper, which was enclosed in oil-cloth as protection against severe weather. The maximum weight of any one mail was twenty pounds.

Yet, the entire venture—as Majors had predicted—was a crushing financial flop. The operation folded in October, 1861, due to a fast developing series of events resulting in rendering the service obsolete almost overnight. The knockout came when telegraph wires spanned the nation and overland stages took over carrying the mails. The three partners—again according to Majors' prediction—went broke. Majors even surrendered his personal estate to help pay company debts.

The Pony Express was simply a victim of bad timing, coming as it did just before the advent of the transcontinental telegraph. On the ninety-fifth anniversary of its founding in St. Joseph (where the original stables have been preserved by the Goetz Pony Express Foundation), U. S. Postmaster General Summerfield, in saluting its achievements, said that it "was a financial failure but a romantic triumph."

It was all that and more, for the exciting story of the short-lived *"Mochila Mail"* is the most thrilling chapter in the history of transportation in the Far West.

World's Weirdest Rodeo

(Continued from page 7)

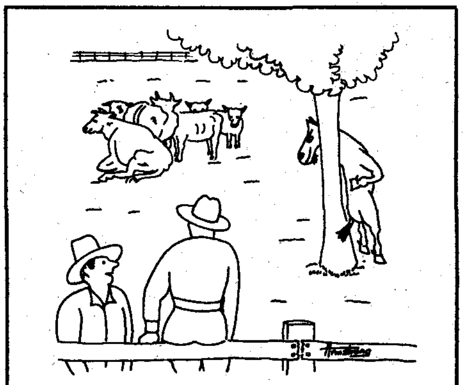
gy, powerful—packin' a big old set of sharp horns jest like an old-time Texas longhorn. Furthermore, this steer was on the prod already—a-jumpin' an' a-bawlin' an' a-blowin' like the devil had him by the tail a-twistin' like hell! Mike thoughtfully built himself a cigarette and took a deep drag, then hopped down off the fence ready for action.

The "Scotch critter" came slamming out of the chute like a *locoed* cross between a mountain goat and an antelope. Bawling, shaking his wide-horned head, spewing froth in all directions, he galloped *buckety-buckety* half the length of the field before Mike and his hazer caught up with him. The hazer headed him, and Mike dived off old Baldy and grabbed those wicked, spreading horns right where he could get the most leverage. Setting his heels in the broken turf, Mike twisted the beast's neck until his glaring eyeballs were staring straight up into the sky. With a last mighty jerk, Mike rasseled the critter down. In fourteen seconds flat the job was done—the Scotch steer stretched out on his side meek and gentle as a yearlin'.

Mike looked up at the stunned, silent crowd and yelled, "Well, dadgum it, what d'ye say *now*? Think we're still fakes?"

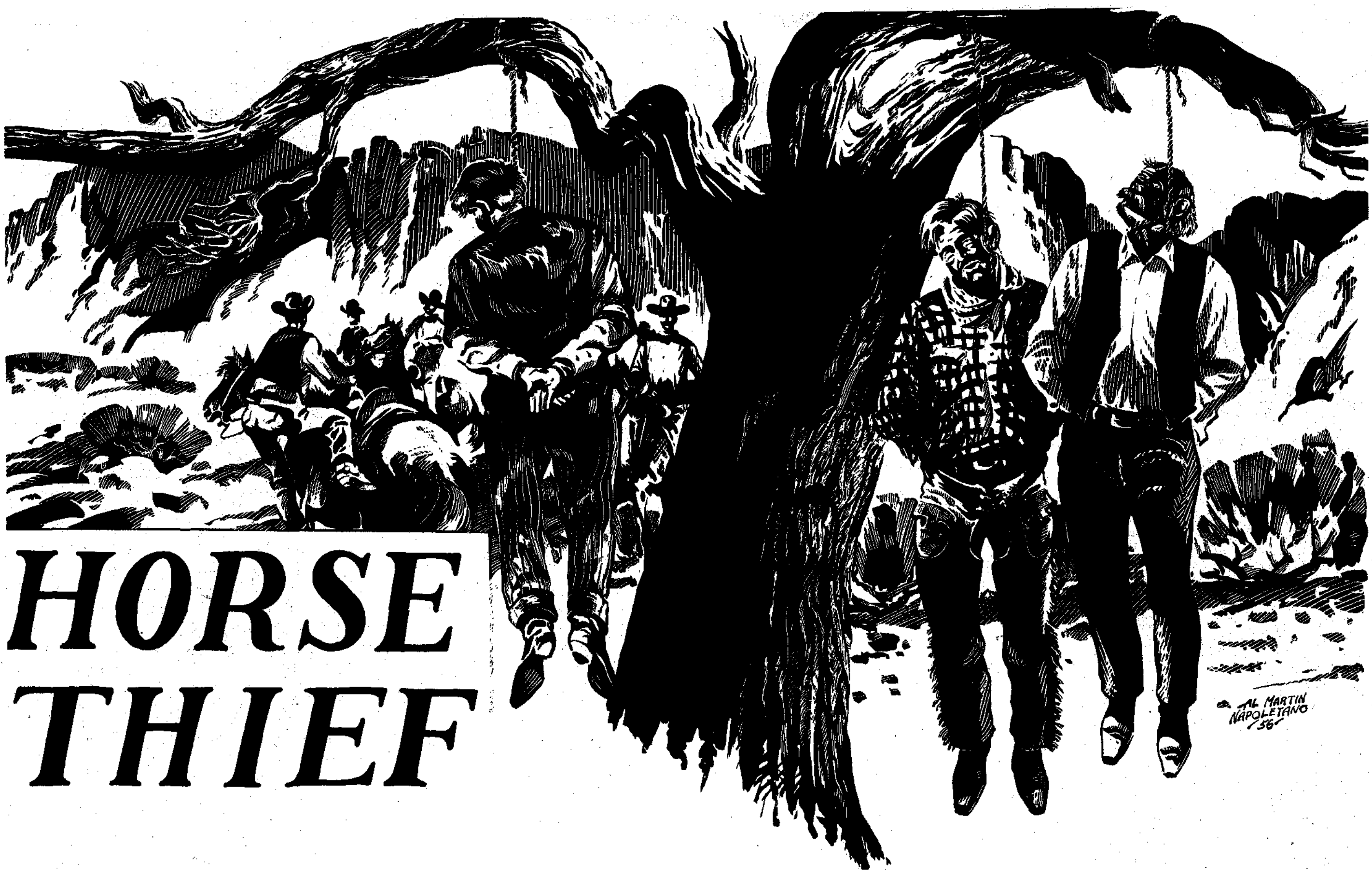
The sedate English spectators responded by jumping to their feet and cheering themselves hoarse—something that happens, roughly, about once in ten years at a British sporting event. Mike had won the hearts of the audience with his demonstration of guts and skill, and they weren't a bit backward about letting him know it.

FROM that moment forward, Tex Austen's outfit was a rip-snorting success in England. Every show was a sell-out, and Tex got back his heavy investment and a few bucks besides. When Tex and his boys finally left England for the trip home to the United States, they sailed with a warm feeling of appreciation for the rousing hospitality they had enjoyed from the British public—belated though it had been. The British newspapers bade them farewell and Godspeed, invited them back and called them "excellent ambassadors of American goodwill to England." Regretting their departure most of all were the English kids. The small fry had found in Tex Austen's picturesque crew a dazzling reincarnation of their story-book heroes of the old American West. They never forgot them.



"He isn't a finished cutting horse, but watch him get to his cow without disturbing the herd."

HORSE THIEF



Horse Thief Canyon, just west of Dodge City, drew its name from the hanging of three horse thieves there.

By NEVADA DICK

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

It's hard to believe, but horse stealing still existed in Nevada in 1934. Basically, the rustlers' methods were identical with those of horse thieves operating in the 1870's and 80's.

THE mere mention these days that horse thieves still followed their old vocation in the West as late as twenty-two years ago, invariably brings a laugh. Yet, in 1934, while a resident of Nevada, I recall the running off of large bands of horses owned by old Bob Steele, whose horses ranged on the Ruby Flats in the semi-desert country, south of Humboldt Wells, a stopping place for immigrant trains bound for California in the early days.

Robert M. Steele had been building up his horse herds for a period of years, and in 1934 had close to a thousand head. The price of horseflesh had jumped, and Bob decided to unload some of his animals. The roundup disclosed that others had notions of supplying horses, and, having none of their own, these bold jaspers had been pilfering stock bearing Steele's brand.

On the morning of August 24, S. C. Weeks, a rancher in Clover Valley, observed strangers hazing horses across his ranch. Weeks immediately returned to his ranch house and phoned Sheriff J. C. Harris in Elko. Within a few hours the sheriff appeared on the scene. The rustlers had disappeared and left no trace. Harris then returned to his office.

Five days later, Sheriff Harris, accompanied by his deputy, Guidici, again visited the locale of the suspected rustling. Reaching a spot on the old stage trail leading from Wells along the Ruby Mountains to Ely, the men parked their car and climbed into the hills to scan the Flats through binoculars. Far across the Flats they made out a band of hobbled horses being hazed across the desert toward Spruce. Returning to their car, the officers headed through the sage-covered sands in pursuit. Sighting the car, the thieves dashed into the "roughs."

The outlaw leader proved a clever *hombre,* and before long the officers found themselves floundering among the sand dunes. Within minutes they were compelled to halt as the car straddled a "high center." It required an hour to dig the car loose, and at the end of that time the horsemen were mere dots on the horizon. By the time the pursuit was again taken up, the elements took a hand. A dust storm, followed by a heavy rain, effectively wiped out all trace of the marauders. The horses, abandoned by the rustlers, were found and driven back to the Steele ranch.

All ranchers in the area, together with their cowboys, were deputized by the sheriff before he returned to Elko. Posses of armed men patrolled the range for weeks, but not a single capture was made. The subject of rustling was still the paramount topic of conversation when, the following month, I found myself washing the alkali dust from my throat at the Bull's Head bar in Wells.

With the exception of the apron and myself, the place was deserted. Soon, however, the batwing doors swung open and in strolled an oldster. He bellied up to the bar beside me and called for a dust-cutter. Acquaintance was quickly made, and before long my new-found *amigo* and I were discussing the late epidemic of rustling that had hit the range.

The talk moved from there to similar conditions on the range in Kansas in the early days. My companion, it seemed, had experienced plenty of adventure back in those times.

"IN the early 70's," he said, "Dad pulled up stakes in Iowa and drifted into Kansas, where he established a ranch along the Arkansas River not far from Cimarron. I was only a little chap, but by the time I was fourteen years old I was herding stock and doing a man's work. The country was still mighty wild and filled with rough characters. A youngster thrown in with such company was bound to get misled, I reckon, and a heap of good boys went wrong.

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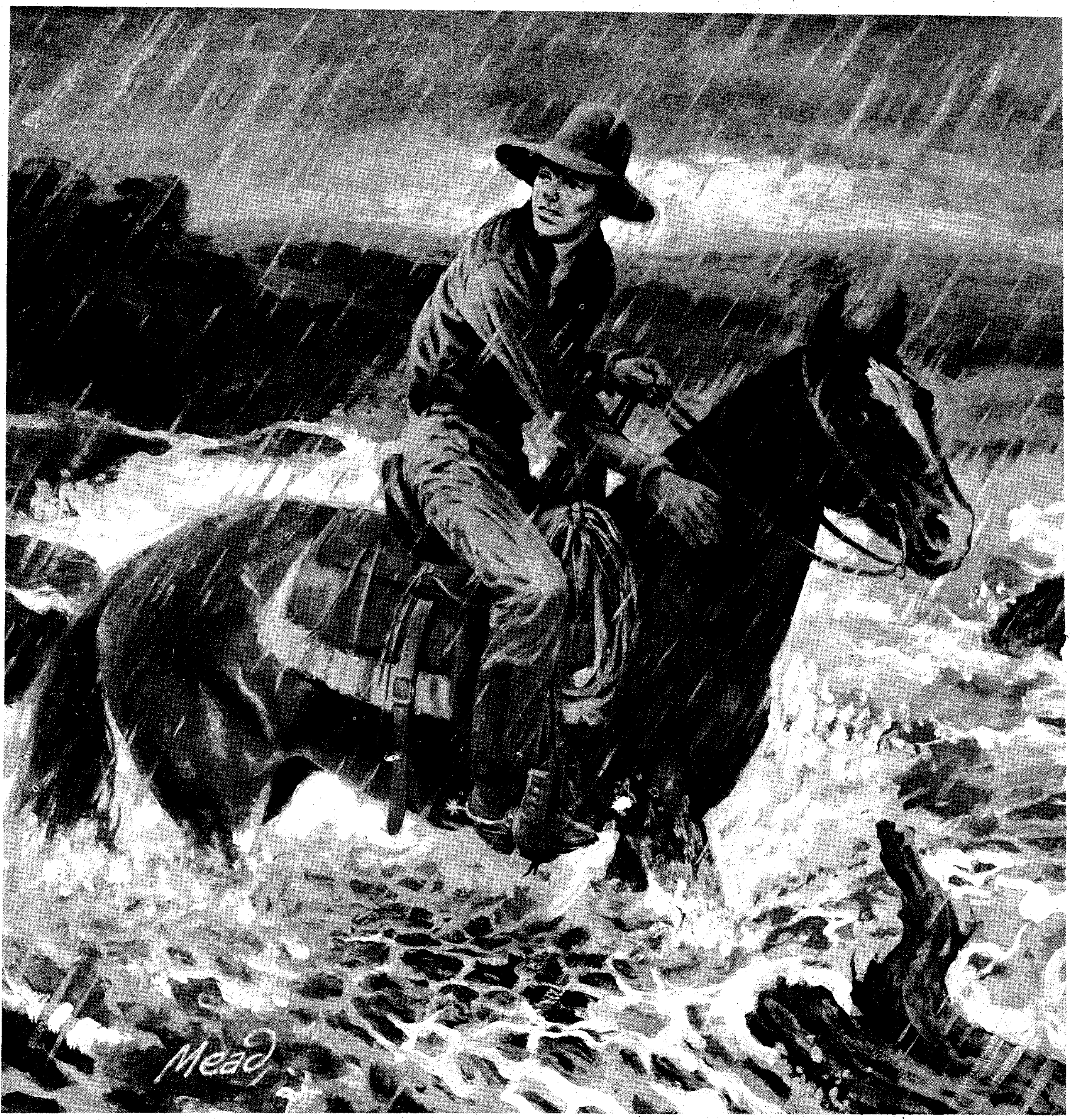


A HORSE TO BRAG ABOUT

By MAX EVANS

Illustrated by Ben Carlton Mead

Your favorite saddle pony was one of them perhaps — Old Snip another. I didn't have a bill of sale — and I didn't steal him—but Old Snip was all mine!

I RECKON just about every human in the world that was raised on a cow ranch, worked as a cowboy, or just plain rode for pleasure knew and loved a horse like Old Snip. In the memory of us all there is one old pony that comes to mind more often than all the others. A horse to do a little braggin' about. That's the kind of horse Old Snip was.

The first time I saw the little stocking-legged, blazed-face, snip-nosed bay, a long-legged bronc stomper named Robert Ion was hanging the steel in his shoulders. It was in a big pole corral at Cow Springs, New Mexico, and the dust was fairly boiling from under Old Snip. He bucked hard, mighty hard, with long, ground-bustin', neck-poppin' jumps, straight ahead till he hit one side of the corral, then he turned and put out all he had till he hit the other side. He bucked straight just like he did everything else in his life. But that was the only time he ever bucked.

Gradually he slowed and then quit altogether. Robert Ion worked him in and out around the corral letting him get used to the weight on his back, the steel in his mouth, the rein on his neck, letting him know that these things wouldn't hurt him if he behaved himself. The little old pony caught on quick and by the fourth saddling, Robert Ion decided he'd turn him over to me.

He said, "Here, boy, get your saddle on this here Old Snip. He's gentle as a loggin' horse."

I was just a gawky, freckled-face kid hanging around the outfit wranglin' horses, patching fences, anything Robert Ion happened to think of that he thought I wouldn't mess up. Mainly I hung around to get a few square meals, listen to the tall yarns cowboys have a habit of spinning and maybe to learn a little something.

"You think he's broke gentle?" I asked cautiously eyeing the bay.

"Why, boy," he said, "this here horse would do to go to preachin' on."

I saddled up, gathered the reins up tight in my left hand, grabbing the heavy black mane at the same time. I took hold of the saddle horn with my right and stuck my left knee in his shoulder, swung my right leg smoothly over his back and Old Snip moved out with a nice running walk. Right away I breathed easy again. I've never known a horse to pick up a fast running walk that quick. He was a natural at it. A running walk will carry a cowboy a lot of miles in a day and bring him back without his tonsils shook loose. Sittin' up there on him I felt just as good as an old coat that a feller's worn a long time and hates to throw away. He was already beginning to rein. The least pressure and he turned smooth as new grass just where you wanted him.

"Now, listen, boy," Robert Ion said when I came back, "I owe Ed Young twenty dollars and I promised him this here horse in payment." My heart turned mighty cold at these words for I thought he was giving the horse to me.

"You been wanting to go over on that San Cristoval outfit and hunt arrowheads, ain't you?"

I said, "Yeah."

"All right, here's your chance. You can leave about daylight in the mornin' and you'll be at the Indian ruins right around ten. I'll make out a bill of sale from me to Ed." he added. "You can stay at the old line camp across from Long Draw tomorrow night and make it in to Ed's the next day."

"Yeah," I said not liking the sound of that *bill of sale* business.

"Something else," Robert Ion said, "If you keep your mouth shut, listen hard and work like hell you might get a job with the San Cristoval outfit. A regular payin' job."

That last sounded good because all I'd got in the way of pay around there was a dollar Robert Ion gave me when we went to Santa Fe one time. That seemed like a lot of money then but I was a year older now and wanted to put on the dog a little.

Me and Old Snip was out on a piñon-crowded trail heading lickety-split for the San Cristoval Ranch when the sun came up. Boy, it was a mighty fine morning. A bunch of deer jumped up out of some oak brush and went tearing up the hill. A coyote crossed our trail and the magpies started screaming. The bluejays flew from tree to tree.

By nine o'clock we crossed the highway between Cline's Corners and Lamy, New Mexico, and were well into the ranch property itself. The highway is fenced now, but then she was wide open. The August sun was warming up fast. I figured it was going to get hotter than blue blazes before noon. Sure enough it did. I didn't care though. Here I was mounted on a little animal that I figured the good Lord had made especially for me and I saw those sky-high, white and red bluffs sticking up like a bunch of cathedrals.

I took the worn out catch rope Robert Ion had given me and tied Old Snip to a piñon tree with a knot that wouldn't slip and choke him later on if he got boogered at something. Then I started out across those ruins with my head down and my eyes peeled expecting any second to see a perfect arrowhead.

Some college feller told me years later that these ruins were five or six hundred years old. They were brand spanking new to me that day in August. You could still see the outlines of the sandstone houses built in a big square. Out in the middle was the round kiva—a sort of church for the Indians. Broken pottery with designs painted on them in real bright colors was scattered about everywhere. There were lots of broken arrowheads and pieces of flint all over.

Then I found what I'd been looking for, a great big perfect arrowhead made out of black glassy obsidian. *Man!* Chills ran all over me and I knew what a prospector must feel like when he pans a big gold nugget for the first time. I got to walking so fast trying to find another one that I probably stepped over several unseen. Boy, I had a pocket just smack full of flint pieces, arrowheads and bright colored pottery.

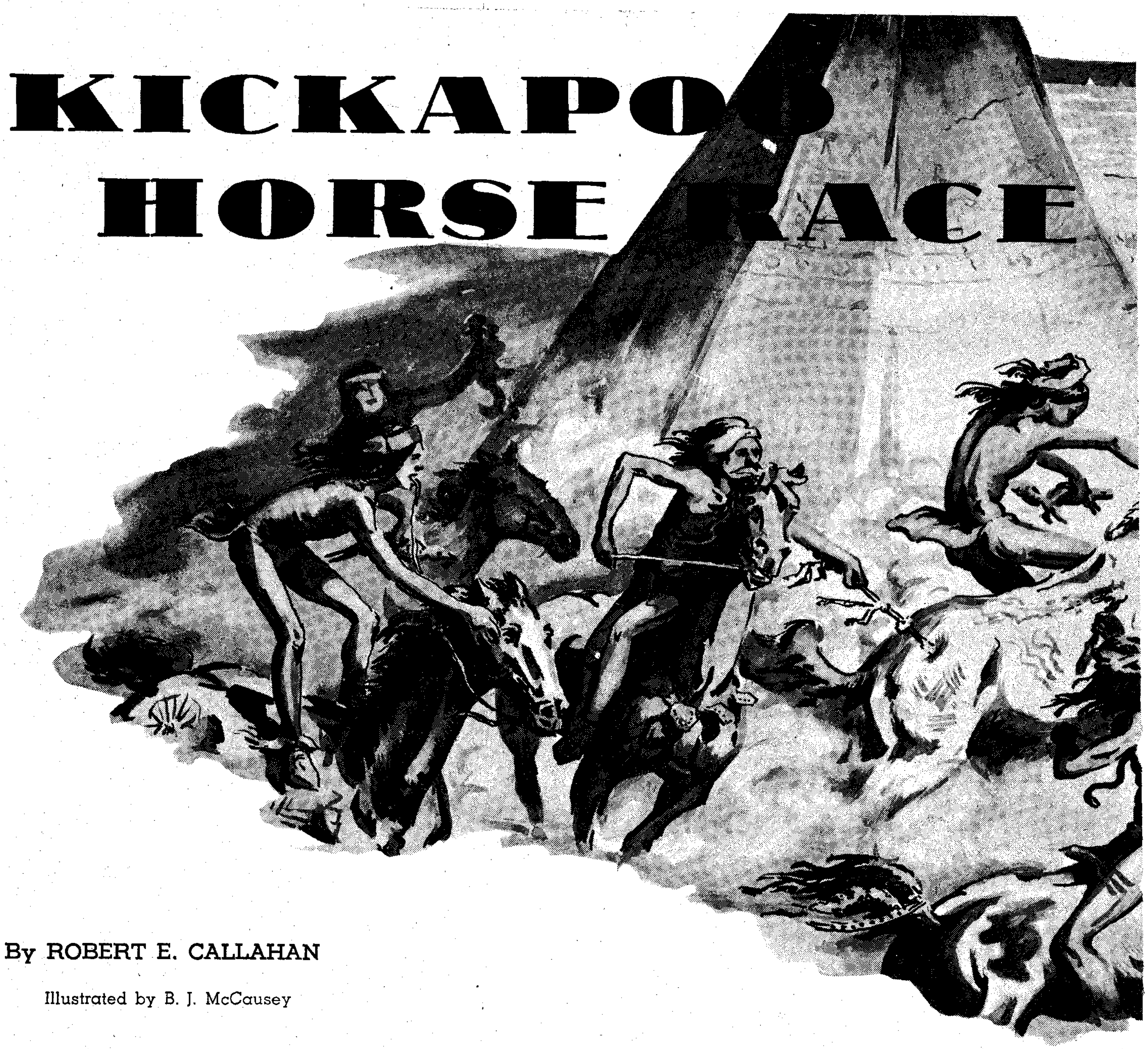
Then I saw another one, white and small, a bird point. Just as I bent to pick it up I noticed a shadow spread across the ground around me. It was a cloud. As I straightened up I looked into the sky. There were lots of clouds, black and heavy with water. They hadn't begun to get together yet so I figured I had plenty of time to hunt.

Between the cathedrals and the line camp where I aimed to spend the night was a lot of barren, badly eroded ground and one deep-cut arroyo called Long Draw. Flash floods in the mountains caused these to fill with water and sometimes made crossing impossible. I was so wrapped up in what I was doing, I didn't pay the clouds much attention.

Then she hit—an earbustin' clap of thunder! I raised up quick-like and looked over to where Snip was tied. He was so wide-eyed you could see the white

(Continued on page 48)

KICKAPOO HORSE RACE



By ROBERT E. CALLAHAN

Illustrated by B. J. McCausey

LONG before race fans ever heard of a Kentucky Derby, Kickapoo and other Indians rode eighty to one hundred horses in a single race. They rode without saddle or bridle, and as a good luck emblem each jockey held an object such as a prairie chicken, a turtle, or even a live snake in one hand as he raced around the course.

Unlike the race course of today, the Kickapoo race track was a mile square, with a huge white tepee set up at each corner of the course, and every rider had to encircle each tepee on his way around the course, reverse his pony at the end of each lap, race back and forth around the track four times and be riding in a different position every time he passed the starting line.

Indian tribes of long ago named their children in an unusual way. In one tribe a newborn baby was given the name of an animal or bird, in another tribe the name of some object the mother had seen in a dream; while among the Kickapoos the baby was called what its mother saw first after the baby was born. Dried Meat, Red Tail Rabbit, Lone Wolf, White Eagle, Big Honk, Yellow Porcupine and Buffalo Grass were typical names.

Willow Bird, the grandson of an old Kickapoo Chief, told us the story of the Kickapoo horse race.

IT was in 1540 that Spanish explorers, seeking the fabled seven golden cities of Cibola in what is now New Mexico, brought the first horses to America. After suffering many hardships and failing to find gold, the Spaniards returned to Spain, leaving their horses to roam the country at will. With the passing of time the herds increased to mammoth proportions, became wild, migrated to the timberland and open prairies, and the Indians knew nothing of their value.

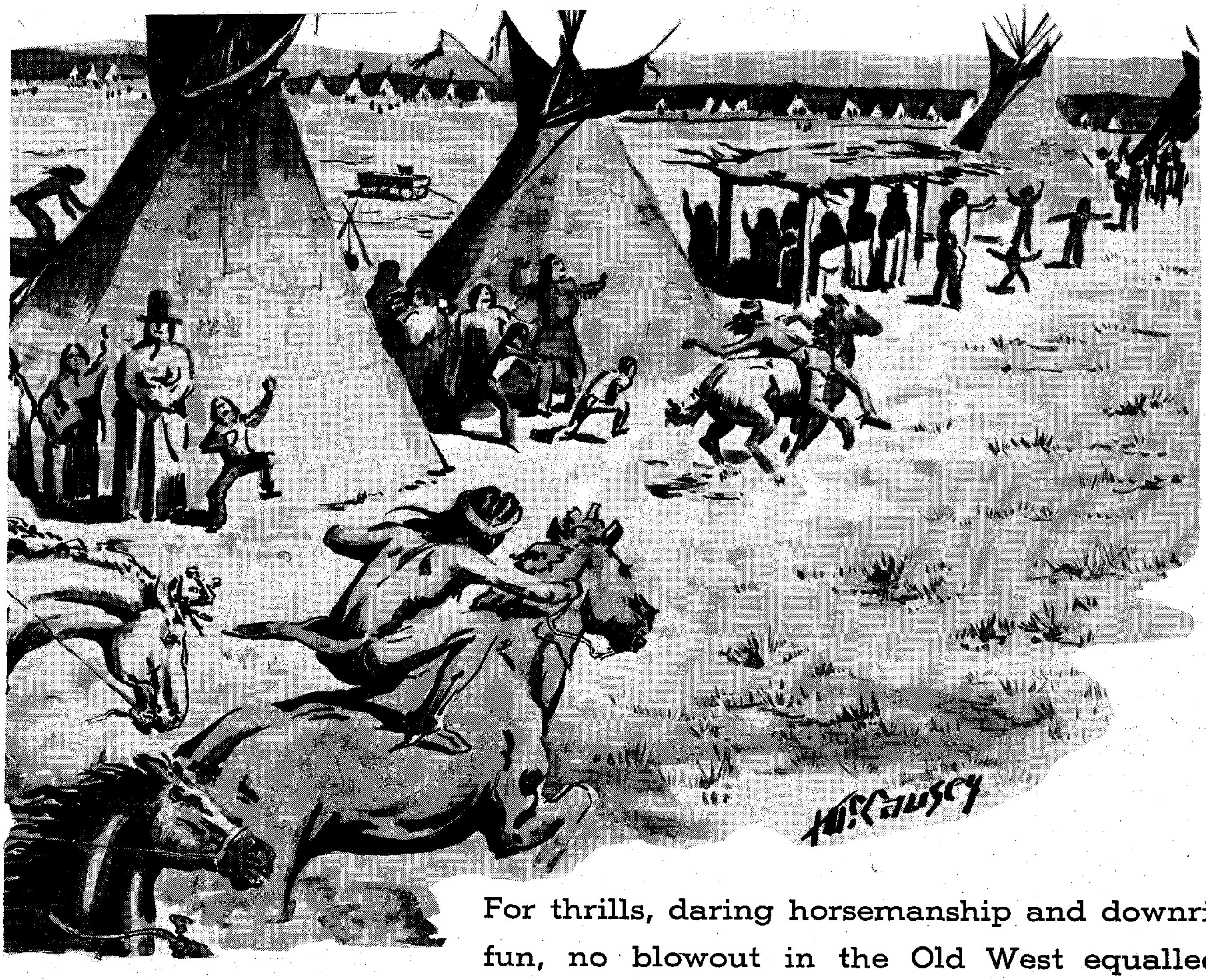
When the white invasion of America began along the Atlantic Coast, the Europeans found the Indians were peaceful and friendly, but when the invaders began to cut down the Indians' timberland, kill their game for sport and ignore their right of occupation, the Indians rebelled and went to war. Then by a government treaty in 1820 with the Indians, a wilderness, that is now Oklahoma, was made into an Indian territory, and Indians from many tribes were induced by promises of peace and plenty to move from their old camping and hunting grounds, or they were driven at gun point into this new territory, where they were to be protected and never molested by white habitation.

In part the treaty said: "This new nation abounding in game and wild fruit shall be the Indians' home, free of white encroachment, as long as grass grows, water runs and the sun shines."

The treaty, however, was only a scrap of paper. By the time various Indians from many tribes got settled in their reservation and were enjoying the freedom of a new bountiful hunting area, white trappers and traders began pouring into the Indian nation, cheating the natives at every turn and filling them with cheap whiskey.

Meanwhile, when the Indians saw how the whites were using horses, they began to catch, tame and train the wild horses, and in a short time, riding bareback, with only a thong around the lower jaw to guide their ponies, they became the most skillful and daring horsemen on earth.

At that time there were more than three hundred tribes among the million



For thrills, daring horsemanship and downright fun, no blowout in the Old West equalled it

Indians in America. Their trails led from one tribe to another, through forests and fertile valleys, out across the barren prairie, mountain ranges and blistering deserts, crossing and recrossing. No two tribes spoke the same dialect, yet through sign talk and by the use of beads, sea shells, prized seeds or pebbles as money, a friendly trade was carried on among all tribes.

IT was in mid-October on the buffalo range of what is now western Oklahoma, that the Kickapoo Indians held their annual and exciting horse race.

A day before the big race, a camp of more than five hundred big white buckskin tepees, vivid Indian symbols painted on their outer walls, were set up all around the track. More than twenty thousand Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Kickapoo, Seminole, Kiowa, Omaha, Sioux, Osage, and other tribal Indians wearing blankets, beads, buckskin and feathers, assembled to watch the annual race.

Along the east side of the track, an Omaha lodge, a Comanche tepee, a Cheyenne wigwam, and a Kiowa sun house stood out like monuments in another world. They housed the four high chiefs and judges of the race.

The frame of the lodge, made of long poles bound together with buckskin thongs, was covered with dried buffalo grass and mud. The wigwam was a tall cone-shaped tepee made with poles, buffalo hides and bear skin. The sun house, octagon in shape, was made of poles and buckskin, with tribal symbols encircling the outer wall. On the Council tepee, a frame of forty foot poles covered with brown buckskin, was painted a story of the feats of the Comanche chief on his rise to power.

For two or three hours before the race, Indian men, women and children milled around the starting line like a giant crowd at a modern ball game. Exhibition riding by teenage boys and girls was the highlight, featured by an Indian girl of only five years who performed spectacular feats astride a speeding pony.

From childhood Indians are taught to play and enjoy games of chance, and before the big race got under way, hundreds of bets were made. A colorful blanket, beaded belts, hammered silver bracelets, fancy wampum pouches, buffalo robes and other Indian art were bet on some favorite entry, it being understood that all winnings at the race would be given to the most needy Indians present.

Just before the race began, four high chiefs, attired in white buckskin, fringed and beaded, a long streamer of eagle feathers flowing down their backs, strode out to the starting line and stood like statues in the glistening sunlight.

There was tense interest as eighty-one jockeys rode their wiry ponies into the foreground, saluted the chiefs and formed a half circle. Each rider was nude except for a beaded or bark headband, and a skin around his waist. Each jockey had also ornamented his pony and his own body in an unusual manner.

Laughing Turtle, the Ponca pony, had a live turtle tied to his head, a thick string of eagle feathers in his tail; his jockey's body was painted sky blue.

Blind Buffalo, a big roan, had two buffalo horns tied to his neck and a bouquet of sunflowers tied to his tail. His jockey had striped his own legs black and yellow.

Yellow Porcupine, a Kiowa entry, had a string of white sea shells and three ears of brown corn tied about his neck, and a red sunrise painted on his hip. His rider's body was painted white, and four long black braids streamed down his back.

The Omaha favorite was a wiry grey mustang whose body had been striped to resemble a zebra. Three strands of buffalo teeth were around his neck, and his tail was full of red-bird feathers. His jockey had a long, live lizard around his neck.

Green and yellow bands had been painted on the back of a Cherokee pony, whose legs were yellow and his ears white. His rider had painted his own left arm green, the other, black.

Black Tomahawk, one of the Kickapoo entries, was a silky black stallion, with long white mane and tail. Grey and white spiderwebs had been painted on his back and legs. Two long live black snakes were coiled around his rider's neck.

AFTER the four chiefs had surveyed the jockeys and their ponies and given their approval of the coming race, a tall Choctaw brave, nude above the waist, emerged from a nearby tepee, paused a moment, surveyed the audience, spread his arms wide and his voice rang out to the Thunder God. The race was on, and the beating of big skin drums and thundering commotion of the crowd echoed far out on the prairie.

As the wiry ponies approached the first tepee, there was a wild scramble for position. The Indians were whooping and yelling. The horses swayed to the right, then to the left, each rider urging his pony to go faster.

Red Tail Rabbit of the Chickasaw tribe, a bundle of turkey feathers about his neck and brown grass tied to his tail, took the lead, but Snow Cloud of the Choctaws and Half Moon of the Shawnees were moving into contention. Neck and neck they dashed around the tepee side-swiping other ponies on the way, and the Chickasaws went into wild applause. But Yellow Porcupine, the Cherokee favorite, with a baby goat astride his shoulder and a fist-size rock swinging from his rider's neck, suddenly ran through the scramble, and forged ahead. The Cherokees yelled, screamed and began a war dance.

As each jockey approached the end of his first lap, he wheeled his pony and like magic was on his way back around the course. A Seminole jockey, singing a native chant and waving a live prairie chicken in the air, was riding backwards, a Potawatomi brave was riding sideways. The daring Cheyenne rider, holding a live turtle, swung along the side, halfway under the belly of his pony—while an Osage jockey was standing on his pony's back, both arms spread wide in the air.

Each jockey in the race, whooping and singing in gleeful anticipation of victory, rode with a reckless disregard for safety. As they were encircling the tepees, one misstep could have tumbled both rider and pony into a dramatic scramble, even death. Mad Wolf of the Omahas, a big black horse, almost dumped his rider as he ran around the south-side tepee on the first lap.

The most dangerous moments were when twenty to thirty horses abreast were speeding around the tepees and crossing the track directly in the path of oncoming ponies. How the jockeys managed to race around the tepees so fast and zigzag between and around so many other speeding horses without going down was an action that would hold a white audience spellbound.

By the time the various riders had made three laps the entrants were strung out all along the track, and twenty thousand red throats were shouting native calls above the thud of a hundred big drums, in the hope of victory for their favorite horse.

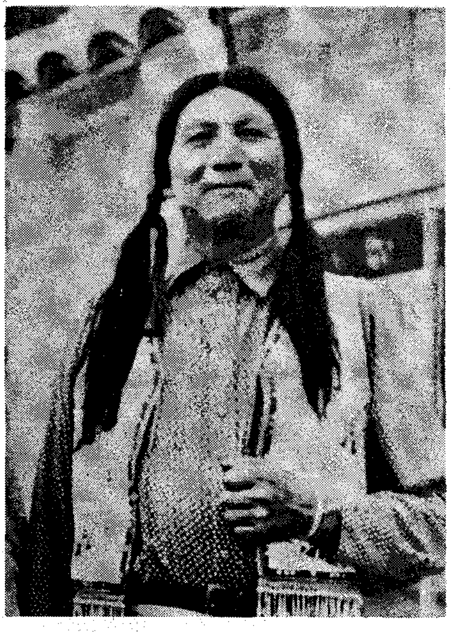
No great game of sport in America nor any bullfight in all Spain or Mexico has ever drawn such a colorful and enthusiastic audience.

DURING the running of the first three laps, the various riders respected each jockey's position on the track, according to rules made by the four chiefs, but there were no rules to follow on the fourth lap. The race was wide open. Any jockey could do as he pleased.

They could bump into each other, fling a blanket in the face of an opponent as he tried to pass, push a rider from his mount, sieze any jockey, or do anything else to enhance his own chance of victory. It was during this period of the race that the crowd went into hysterical applause, dance and joy. None of the riders resented any interference, for this was a day of united sportsmanship.

Halfway around the fourth lap, Yellow Porcupine led the field, but Mad Wolf, Blue Moon and Beaver Dam, running neck and neck, cut in from the outside to take the lead. For a moment, either horse seemed sure of victory, but suddenly from way behind came White Eagle on Black Tomahawk, the Kickapoo favorite.

An old cowbell was swinging and ringing beneath the horse's neck, a coonskin and wild turkey feathers were tied to his tail. Beneath his tail was a bundle of dry cockleburs, which irritated and caused the horse to jump, leap and plunge ahead as though he might jump right out of his own skin. White Eagle, with a flaming torch in one hand, and with two live snakes dangling about his neck, was giving the most spectacular performance ever seen in an Indian nation.



Chief Big Tree, full blood Iroquois, who is still living and will verify what his father told him of the prairie horse races.

He had ridden the first lap in a normal riding position; on the second lap he rode along the side, halfway under the belly of his pony; on the third, he rode backward. Now in the final lap his head was on his pony's back, his feet in mid-air, and he came thundering over the buffalo prairie to win the race by three lengths, and the audience burst into a wild ovation.

As he dismounted, countless Kickapoos gathered around him like swarming bees. Four maidens in white buckskin and beads moved in quickly to place a wreath of sunflowers around his neck, then laid numerous tokens of Indian art at his feet.

As the Cheyenne, Comanche and Kiowa chiefs stood at attention, Red Cloud, the Kickapoo Chief, said in signs:

"This day has been full of sunshine, fellowship and fun for my people. We are proud of our victory, but we want all of you to know we Kickapoos did not come here for personal gain. This race was for all—not for one. We came to meet old friends and make new ones among other tribes."

Here he paused, his eyes moving to survey the audience. Then in solemn majesty he said, in signs:

"As the paleface continues to move into our reservation without cause, we must unite in thought and prepare to meet them with a friendly hand, urge them to respect the treaty their White Father made with us, and allow us the freedom of the great outdoors."

Again he paused, and the thud of many drums echoed far out on the open prairie. As the drone of drums faded in the distance, he concluded with oratorical expression:

"The Sun is our Father, the Earth our Mother, the stars our guiding spirits at night. The Sun comes to light the day, make trees live, fruits ripen, flowers bloom, and grass grow on which the buffalo thrive and from which we get meat and warm robes which aid us during the cold of winter. Without the Sun there would be no light, no grass, no meat, no fruit, no flowers, no health. Therefore, we must thank the Great Spirit in daily prayer for the power of the Sun and Earth."

As he closed his eyes and extended his open palms to the earth, the audience looked skyward in silent prayer, and the faint beat of drums sounded in reverence.

FOR the next two hours Indian leaders from different tribes gave talks in behalf of their people, stressed the value of inter-tribal friendship and how the Indians could urge the whites to respect the Indians' right of occupation. For the rest of the afternoon there was fellowship in the big camp. Teen-age girls and boys played hide and seek, leap frog, buffalo and other games.

The women of one tribe mingled with those of another. Young braves wrestled or ran foot races; older men told stories or played jokes on each other. Others learned the chants and dances of other tribes. Later the entire audience feasted on barbecued buffalo meat, wild turnips, roasted potatoes and corn soup.

As a vivid sunset began to spread streamers of pink, blue and gold across the western sky, the entire audience assembled in a massive half circle and squatted on the ground to watch impending feats of magic.

Many braves did puzzling acts. Among them was an Omaha who swallowed a two-foot, red-tipped flint arrow, whirled around four times, then spat out two short arrows whose tips were blue.

A Kiowa brave ran into the arena with a skin pouch of boiling water. He set it down, then reached into the water and with bare hand, pulled out a live baby rabbit.

A Comanche medicine man placed a grain of wheat on the ground, pushed it into the soil with his feet, went into a hysterical dance and out of the earth popped a green sprig. The stem quickly grew to a height of five feet, and suddenly its top burst into a golden sunflower. Only the clever Indians knew the method of their magic.

As the performers completed their acts, a stately Choctaw appeared to ignite a pile of dry logs, pine cones and buffalo chips. As the flames grew, the

Indians formed four huge rings around the big fire. Teen-age girls, holding hands, formed the inner ring and began dancing to the right; young braves, joining hands, formed a second ring and moved to the left; women, hands interlocked, made up the third ring and danced to the right; while the outer ring, all men, with locked hands danced to the left, with every Indian moving in perfect rhythm to the beat of four big yellow drums.

On and on the giant crowd danced and sang without a pause for two hours. As the bonfire grew dim and blue curls of smoke faded into the night, each Indian bowed to the Earth in profound reverence.

Now came the enchanting climax. A little campfire was started in each of the five hundred tepees at the same moment. As faint red lights glimmered through the tops of the tepees, the Indians in mass formation rose to their feet, humming a sacred chant, and strolled toward the tepees.

At the break of dawn each tepee was taken down, loaded on a travois or packed on a pony, and the Indians, full of peace and pleasant memories, started back to their native villages, many of them miles and miles away, yet every Indian old enough to know right from wrong was thinking of white emigration and what lay ahead. Little could they know what really would happen.

DURING the ensuing fifty years, more than a thousand treaties designed to respect and protect the American Indian from white man's encroachment were made—treaties of hope, peace and plenty. Treaties that meant no more protection to the Indian than a grain of dust floating on the ocean of time. Treaties that cheated, deceived, and drove the Indian from pillar to post; *on and on to some rock-bound reservation* on which not even a blade of grass would grow.

The old trails became lonely trails of blasted hope, dissolution, tears and tragedy. No longer did the Indian have a permanent place in which to hunt, fish and enjoy the freedom of the great outdoors. But one thing the Indian knew. He had never encroached on the land of another tribe, nor spoken ill of any white man who treated him fairly.

Like his father and forefather before him, he had danced and prayed on the barren prairie, in the timberland and on the mountain top. He had roamed the wildwood in peace and listened to the music of the wind and waterfall. Native instinct had taught him to watch the flight of the birds, the movement of the clouds, *the moon, the stars and the* growth of plant life. Of late, and with profound sorrow, he had watched great herds of buffalo break from peaceful grazing into a wild stampede and romp over the plains in fear of the paleface gun; yet in his heart was an undying desire for peace.

Day and night he had offered prayer to the Great Spirit and would pray on and on, striving and hoping that some day the white man would respect the Indians' right of occupation, for he was a child of nature and the only true First American.

"Well, old horse, it just seems like some days nothin' goes right."

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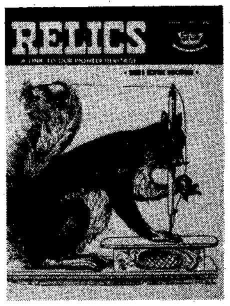

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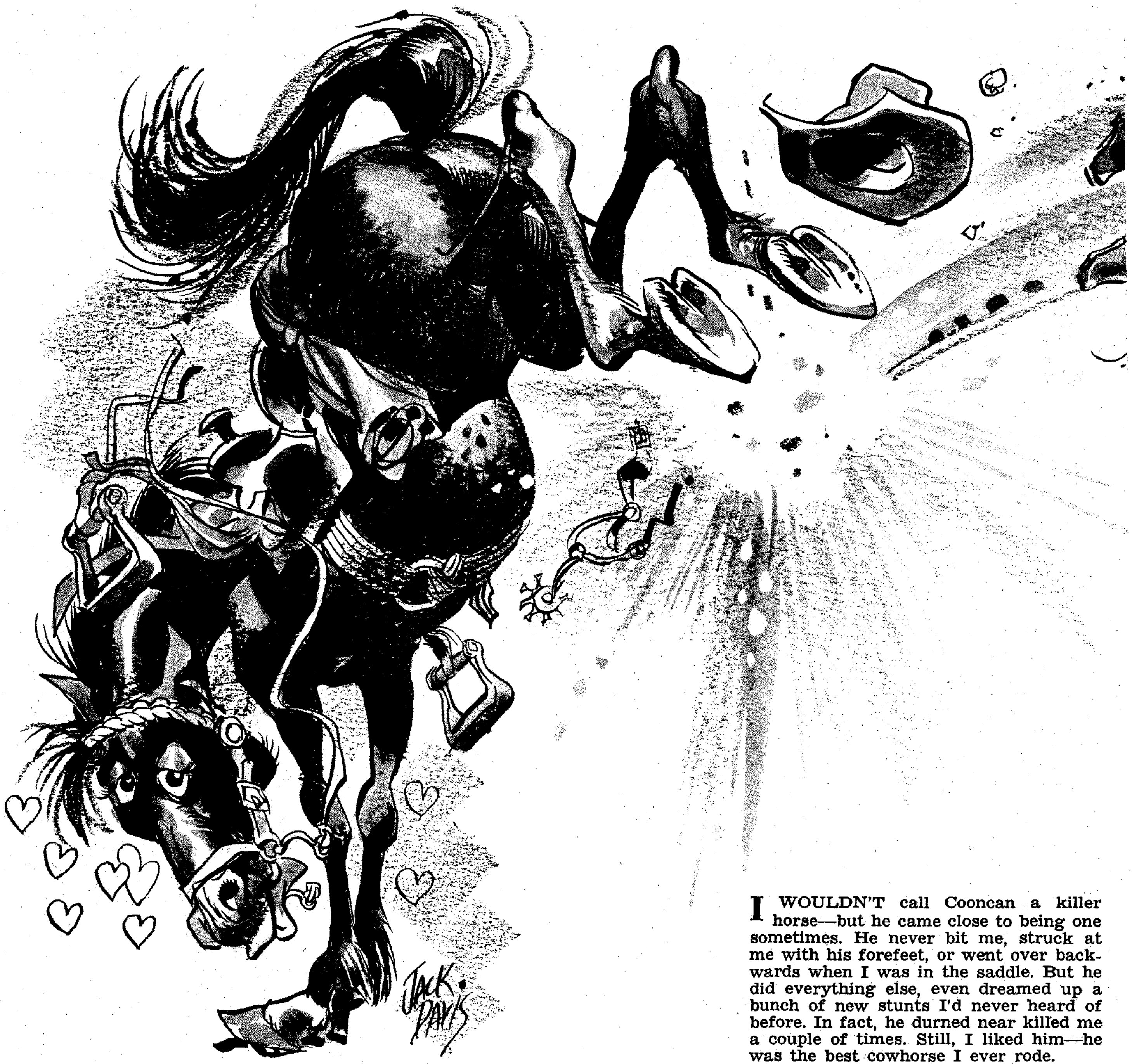


The man loved his horse and sometimes he even thought that love was returned. About then was when Cooncan would try to kill him . . . .

I WOULDN'T call Cooncan a killer horse—but he came close to being one sometimes. He never bit me, struck at me with his forefeet, or went over backwards when I was in the saddle. But he did everything else, even dreamed up a bunch of new stunts I'd never heard of before. In fact, he durned near killed me a couple of times. Still, I liked him—he was the best cowhorse I ever rode.

He was a short-coupled coal-black gelding, the only horse I ever saw without a white hair. I never had a chance to weigh him, but would guess him to weigh a thousand pounds or more. He had a flat face (I never saw a horse with a Roman nose that was worth a damn!) and never had a saddle-sore nor a cinch-sore in all the time I had him.

I had a good black full-stamped roping saddle with pockets and a white buckskin seat—cost me sixty-five bucks, more than a month's wage on the ranch in southeastern Wyoming where I was working. It had one-piece four-inch stirrup leathers, no lacing—you just wound them around and around, adjusting them to get both the right length. A small strap around and just above the stirrups held them.

I have never seen cinch-rings like those on this saddle. They were wide at the bottom with a hump in the middle.

My horse didn't like me

By FAY SMITH

Illustrated by Jack Davis

I could slip the latigos forward and have a Spanish or three-quarter rig or slip them back and have a center-fire rig. It was a single cinch saddle. I seldom used the center-fire, other than a few times when I thought there were signs of a cinch-sore forming behind the top of a foreleg. We didn't have the breast plates ropers use nowadays—just used a tight cinch.

I wonder why saddles today are all double-rigged. Many years ago they were the same way, but we threw away the rear cinch and just used the front one. But it was too far forward and caused cinch-sores. I notice now that riders have the rear cinch buckled and loose, but that doesn't do any good. Of course, these cowboys today maybe don't ride as long and far as we did.

I BOUGHT Cooncan from an old cowboy for a hundred dollars. I knew the horse was mean, but he was so good to look at I couldn't resist. I fed him well, and had a good place to keep him. I had a nice little horse pasture, a half-section that came up to a "V" at my round corral. The pasture was never overgrazed and was in use the year round. It had a big spring of cold sweet water. Although I always kept the mangers filled with hay, I liked to grain feed the horses I was riding. My friends told me I shouldn't give Cooncan oats—he had soup and vinegar enough without them. But I like soup and vinegar.

I couldn't touch him back of the cinch. I had to tie up a front foot to shoe him or pull his tail. I don't like to ride (or even look at!) a fan-tailed horse. Those long tails can have burrs, get frozen and are generally a nuisance. To pull a horse's tail I wear gloves, pick up four or five of the longer hairs, wrap them around a finger or two, give a quick hard jerk, and out they come. Sounds cruel, but I don't think it is. Horses don't seem to mind it.

Cooncan bucked every day, always when first saddled and sometimes afterwards. I always had a quirt hanging from my right wrist, and preferred it to spurs. I wasn't trying to make him buck, but to stop him. I soon gave up trying to gentle him—he would buck as long as he lived. I would pour on that quirt with a sort of figure-eight swing, up under his chin and down under to the rear. I would get his head up, and a quirt under the chin helps. He was tender-mouthed too, and a horse can't buck with his head up. I knew I could ride him and he knew it too, so we got along. He never made me meet my shadow on the ground.

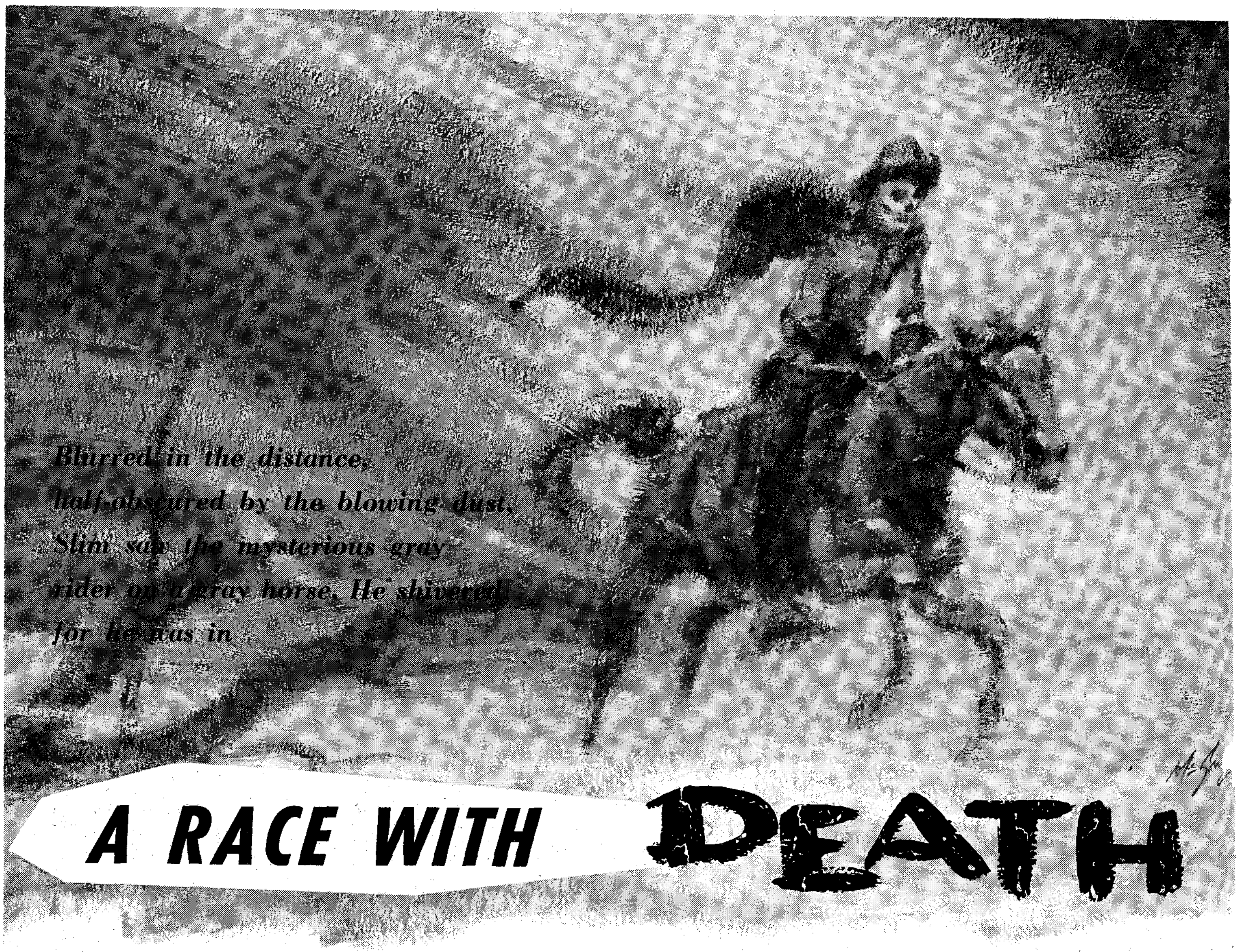
HE WAS SMART, could think. One morning when I went up to mount him, he, with perfect timing, jumped sideways away from me just when I threw my right leg over. My leg missed the saddle entirely. He started to buck; I was helpless and wound up under his neck, my left foot in the stirrup, my right hand on the horn, loose reins in my left hand. I dared not to let go and drop to the ground for I would have been trampled. Lucky for me another rider was there and picked me up. I remounted Cooncan and gave him the roughest ride of his life, giving him all I had with both spurs and quirt.

I tried never to give him another chance to do that again. At the ranch I would lead him to the corral fence and put his right side close to the rails. Out on the range, if I got off to open a gate, I would put him up against the wire fence. Other times, with no fence but another rider with me, I would put him alongside the other horse. Another thing I did that helped was pull the reins almost tight and grab a handful of mane in my left hand. I could have chocked him—that is, grasped the headstall on the bridle—but that's poor practice when a man rides a horse as often as I rode Cooncan.

Finally he got me again. It was my fault—I was careless. It was a very cold winter morning—so cold I took the bridle into the kitchen to warm the bit before putting it into his mouth, so it wouldn't freeze his tongue. It can get cold in a Wyoming winter at eight or nine thousand feet altitude, where our ranch was located. I must have ridden him forty or fifty miles that day. Coming home after dark and still a couple of miles from home I got off to open a wire gate. I was tired and supposed Cooncan was—he should have been. I didn't put him up against the fence because of the brush and snow. He was laying for me. He jumped sideways just as I swung my leg over, but I had a handful of mane and managed to hook the spur on my right foot under the saddle-skirt and managed to climb into the saddle as he pitched down the road. As soon as I could find the stirrup I gave him another rough ride, scratching him good from his shoulders to his hips. I was handicapped, too, for I was wearing a heavy pair of black angora fur chaps, a short fur coat, and overshoes. But I had my spurs. I wouldn't ride a merry-go-round horse without spurs; they've helped me so many times. One time on an elk hunt in the Jackson Hole country I was fording the Hoback River on an old gentle hunting-camp horse when he tried to lay down in the middle of the river. My spurs saved me from a ducking. I just managed to lift him up in time.

Sometimes when I was riding Cooncan through a gate he would jump sideways and try to hook my leg against the gate. Once he jumped beneath the low limb of a tree trying to catch me, but didn't get

(Continued on page 44)



Blurred in the distance, half-obscured by the blowing dust, Slim saw the mysterious gray rider on a gray horse. He shivered for he was in

A RACE WITH DEATH

BY L. W. HOWARD

Illustrated by Clay McGaughy

"RIDE him, cowboy!"

"Get him a rockin' horse, he can't ride!"

"Come on, Mex, let's get goin'!"

The cowboys' yells sounded on the crisp morning air as Mex did his best to stay on his plunging, sidewheeling horse. The slim Mexican youth was a good rider, but he was having trouble staying aboard his mount. Devil was the horse's name, and devil he was. He was determined not to be ridden, and equally determined to kill his rider if possible.

It was the Spring roundup at the Pickring Ranch, where the open range made a sorting-out of the various brands necessary. When the sorting process was completed, the herds would be trailed to the railroad at Dodge City, almost ninety miles due south.

The sun came up as Mex fought with his horse. Dew sparkled on everything; clothes felt damp, and saddles were slippery and cold. Already, at four-thirty, the riders were starting out. Men from neighboring ranches had already left, not waiting to see the contest between Mex and Devil. There was nothing interesting to them in a bucking horse. All these broncs bucked, some more than others. Once saddled, a horse had to be ridden; never must he be allowed to win.

The boys from Clyde Pick's ranch, where the roundup was being held, waited anxiously for Devil to settle down. There was reason for their concern, as Mex had twisted his knee while tying a calf the day before and so his seat was not as good as usual. And Devil was sure raising hell!

Suddenly, with shocking suddenness, it happened. Devil plunged viciously, then reared and threw himself over backwards. Mex was caught beneath the horse, the high Mexican horn of his saddle smashed cruelly into his chest.

Clyde Pick's rope whipped out and caught Devil's thrashing feet. Slim, a buddy to Mex, ran over and sat on Devil's head. The other boys, working fast but carefully, eased Mex out from under.

Mex was in bad shape. Blood was welling from his nose and mouth. Clyde Pick dismounted, held his .45 to Devil's head and fired. "That's the last time *he'll* act up!" he said grimly.

Mex was coming to, groaning faintly.

"Lay still, boy," Clyde said. "We'll get the doc and you'll be all right."

Gently the boys moved the injured rider onto a blanket and carried him to the chuckwagon. They returned to the boss.

"Think he's got a chance?"

Clyde shrugged. "He's young, who can tell?" Pick turned to Slim. "Take Geronimo. He's the toughest horse we got and if you kill him it won't matter too much. Ride for Dodge and get Doc. Follow the cattle trail due south and bear west a little after you cross the Pawnee. When you get to Walnut Creek you'll be half-way to Dodge—about forty-three or forty-four miles. The Arkansas is about forty miles farther on. Get some jerky from the cook and *ride!*"

SLIM went to the chuckwagon and got some jerky. He looked in on Mex and found him still conscious. "I'm leavin' now for Dodge," he told him. "You'll be all right, feller, after the Doc gets here."

Mex tried to grin, but the effort was too much for him. His olive-complexioned face was pale and beaded with sweat; he didn't look good.

The sun was just above the horizon when Slim set out. To Geronimo he muttered, "Nigh onto ninety miles we gotta go, old-timer. Glad the ground is soft from all that rain we been havin', so your feet'll hold up."

They swung into an easy lope. After three miles they walked, Slim doing the unprecedented thing of walking with his horse. Then another lope and another walk. About two hours later they hit Smoky Hill River, twenty miles from the ranch. Slim let Geronimo drink a little water. He loosened the girth, reset the saddle, and threw water on the horse to cool him off.

Again they were on their way. Slim talked to Geronimo. "We're doin' all right, old chief. Just take it easy and we'll make it fine." A jack rabbit popped up before them and spooked Geronimo. After Slim got him settled down again, he admonished: "Hey, you loco Apache, that won't do! You'll get all wore out actin' thataway."

They rode on. The wind stiffened and dust hazed the sky. Slim glanced behind him and thought he saw a horse and rider, blurred in the distance, half-obscured by the blowing dust. A gray horse and a gray rider! Was he racing Death himself? Slim shivered at the eerie thought, and then laughed at himself for thinking it. "Reckon you ain't the only one gettin' spooked on this trip," he told Geronimo.

The wind went down; the gray horse and the gray rider disappeared.

The sun had climbed high when they came to Walnut Creek. Again Slim allowed Geronimo to drink a little, loosened his girth a minute or two, and sprinkled him with water. Then he ate a few bites of jerky and took a drink himself. They moved on to Pawnee River, ten miles away.

The white cottonwoods on the river bank showed up ghost-like as a sudden storm came up. Lightning played in the treetops. The wind picked up and blew rain at Slim and Geronimo in horizontal streaks. Their pace slowed to a walk.

GERONIMO balked at entering the swirling, muddy water of the Pawnee. He'd had enough of this long, lonely ride. He liked to be near other horses and close to cattle. He reared and wheeled, determined to go home. Slim wasted a precious fifteen minutes turning Geronimo and getting him across the water. Once on the other side he dared not dismount for fear Geronimo would pull away and leave him with a good forty-five miles still to go.

The storm passed on; the sun came out; the ground steamed. Slim's shadow had walked around to his left side; now it was lengthening. The afternoon hours sped away; the miles grew longer.

Smoke—train smoke! Dodge must be close. A final walk beside Geronimo, then the swinging lope again. At last—Dodge City!

Slim rode directly to the livery stable. "Where's the doc?" he asked the watchman.

The watchman looked curiously at him. "In his office, next door. What's wrong?"

Slim dismounted and tossed him the reins. "Here, rub him down good, but don't feed him. Give him just a little water."

"You think I don't know how to take care of a horse?" asked the liveryman indignantly.

Slim had no time to answer; he was hurrying off.

He burst into the doctor's office. Ignoring the patients in the waiting room, he hollered: "Doc, come right away! A man's been rolled on by his horse!"

The doctor came out of the inner room. He looked at Slim's strained face, and then glanced at his patients. None seemed in urgent need of him. To Slim he said: "All right, young man. Go to the stable and tell them to get Bob ready. I'll pack up." To his patients he said simply: "I'll be back as soon as I can, but you'd better not wait for me."

Slim relayed the message to the stable man. He walked along the stalls, looking the horses over, judging which one to take for the return trip. None seemed as strong as Geronimo. There was nothing to it but to ride him back.

It was six o'clock by the time Slim and the doctor set off. The rubdown and a dry saddle blanket had helped Geronimo. Also, he was going home and that fact would keep him moving.

A three-quarter moon came out to light the way, casting spectral shadows on the trail. Suddenly, Slim thought he again saw the gray rider on the gray horse; this time they were slightly ahead of him. Slim shook his head sharply to rid himself of the vision. Such loco ideas! He convinced himself that he had seen a wolf—and, seconds later, found himself wondering again. Coming toward town the rider had been behind him; now, leaving town, he was ahead. Did that mean . . . ? Resolutely, Slim closed his mind to the grim implication.

THE STARS were getting on to midnight when they came to the Pawnee River. The flood had gone down, so the horses entered the river willingly. The pace was telling on Geronimo. He wasted no energy on foolishness, but plugged determinedly along.

Walnut Creek, and then Smoky Hill River. Only twenty miles to go—maybe three hours riding. Should be light by then . . .

The stars wheeled on; pale light touched the tops of the hills as dawn broke. Just this time yesterday the boys had been saddling up for the day's work; only twenty-four hours and yet it seemed like an eternity. *Wonder how Mex is,* Slim thought wearily to himself. *Sure hope we're in time . . .*

The fire of the camp showed ahead. Geronimo pricked up his ears, and came in with them up, happy to be home.

Clyde Pick came out to meet them. His face was drawn with fatigue. "Made a fast trip, Slim. Sorry to get you out here for nothing, Doc. The boy died about sundown."

"I was afraid of that. Those chest injuries are usually fatal." The tired doctor dismounted and headed for the chuck-wagon for coffee.

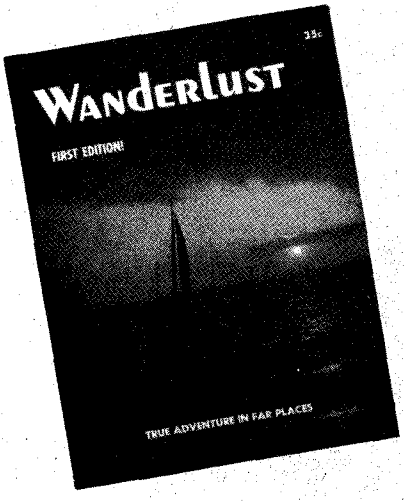
The boss laid a hand on Slim's shoulder. "See you brought Geronimo back. That was good ridin'."

The rest of the outfit crowded around to exclaim over Geronimo's condition. He was tired but by no means played out. His head was low, but he was on his feet and breathing easily. Slim walked around to examine his feet. They were cracked but not too sore. A couple of days turned out to grass and Geronimo would be as tough and ornery as ever.

"Yeah, the ol' boy did all right," Slim told the men. "A hundred and eighty miles in twenty-four hours. Yeah, he sure did all right!"

Slim pulled off the bridle, gave Geronimo a slap on the rump, and watched him trot off to join the horse herd. Then he headed for the wagon to get breakfast.

The cook silently handed him a cup of strong, black coffee. Dulled with fatigue, Slim drank the bracing liquid and thought again of the gray rider on the gray horse. Poor Mex, the gray rider had marked him for his own—he hadn't had a chance.



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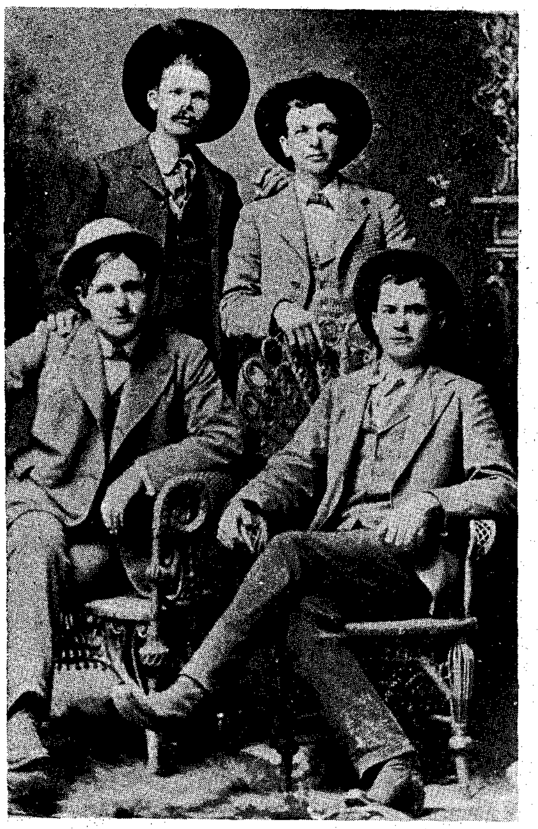
"he'd rather di

"He was the prettiest horse we'd ever seen, so we decided to capture him. We didn't know it'd kill him not to be free"



Johnny Burris, seated right, shown with Dave Kingly (next to him) and, standing left to right, Pat Garrett's nephew—a Mr. Jackson, and Hal Kerr. This was taken about 1903.

NOT so many years ago, I came across Johnny Burris of whom I had heard all my life. I didn't know I would ever see him, though his name had lived in my memory because he was my father's friend and I knew they had been cowboys together in the Big Bend country. He became a sort of tradition and I later wondered about him, because my father died when I was young and I hadn't been inquisitive about his friends up to then. As the years went by, I supposed that Johnny Burris had passed on; our paths never seemed to cross. But there had remained in my memory a waltz my father used to play on the violin and which he called "Johnny Burris" and one that I also loved to play on the piano. It was one, I learned later, that his old cowboy friends had loved to dance by when they were at Sanderson, and they didn't know the name of it. Because Johnny loved it more than the others, my father had called it "Johnny Burris."

Knowing that Johnny must have been quite a character, I was more than eager to talk with him when I learned that he was living within forty miles of me, at the old town of Brackettville, Texas. Each time we met, our conversation drifted to the Big Bend and the old days when he knew my father and the things they did when they were together, either riding the range or in town for supplies which easily could have been at the time a dance was scheduled. I've also gleaned a little about his life before and since those days. I learned that he was born in Beeville, Texas, November 27, 1878, which made him one year younger than my father. His parents moved to Cotulla when he was quite small and there is where he spent his school days. There, also, he knew Miss Jenny Lawrie, a young lady who later married Dominic Hart, a man widely known as a cowman, who soon figured largely in Johnny's life.

THE D. Hart holdings might well have been a "principality" within the greater kingdom of the Big Bend and the country north of it. Johnny Burris went to work for D. Hart in 1903 at the age of twenty-five. He considered himself as good a "bronc twister" as could be had, though he was modest in his claims, knowing that the best of them *could* be thrown. He had worked for quite a few outfits and had broken horses from New Mexico to the Big Bend when he took over the job of running the D. Hart spread.

"D. Hart owned 1,000 sections in his own right," Burris said, "besides the sections of state land and smaller ranches he had leased. Actually, I don't know just how much country altogether he did control, but I know it took a lot of riding to look after it.

"He ran 10,000 head of cattle, 10,000 head of horses and 60,000 head of sheep. His range ran from Sanderson to the Pecos High Bridge, north then to the T5s and south of Dryden to the Rio Grande. He kept 350 men employed with the different cow and horse outfits, windmill men and fence builders. He had five Mexican sheepherders and two others to help with the camp arrangements; one man to move the sheep camps and the other to supply the water. Those big flocks were not allowed to bed twice at the same place; there was a new camp each night.

"That was all Pecos County then; Terrell County had not been cut out of it at that time. It was so big, and there were so many rustlers, also other big outfits similar to our own, that D. Hart decided I should be deputized so that I would have the right to wear a gun. It was for my own protection as well as his, for the cowmen didn't get along with the sheep men in those days, and the matter wasn't taken lightly. The fact that D. Hart owned about as many cattle as any of the others helped the situation, however.

"Anyway, Hart sent up to Fort Stockton and got R. B. Neighbors to make out the papers for my deputyship. He sent them down to me to have them notarized and I had to go over to old Judge Roy Bean and get them signed up. Roy Bean has been so glamorized the past years, the real man has been lost sight of. He read to me all there was to read on those papers I had to sign, and read each sentence and stopped, to see how I was taking it. He would wait a little after every sentence to see if I wanted to back down, but I just waited too and kept quiet. When he had finished he looked at me and waited again, but I didn't say anything, so he just asked me if I understood what my duties would be and I told him yes. He said he guessed I would do, or something to that effect and signed it."

As Burris talked, he went to his safe and began looking through a lot of old pictures, clippings and papers. Finally, he produced the original certificate which was sent to him that year from the county seat of the enormous county of Pecos. The certificate reads:

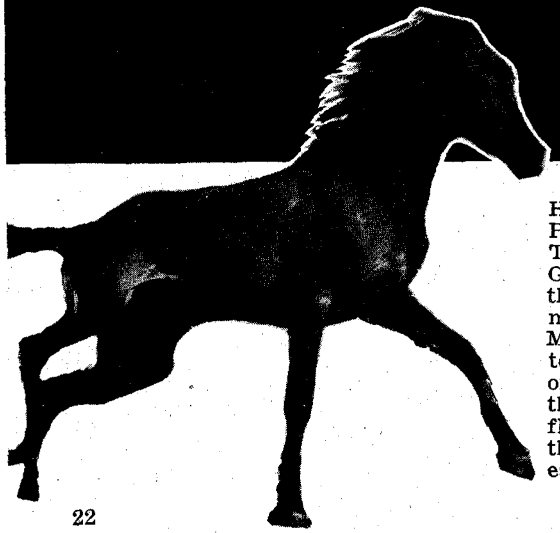
"The State of Texas)
County of Pecos)

I, W. A. Hadden, County Clerk of said County and State, do certify that J. J. Burris was, on the 10th day of January A. D. 1903 appointed Deputy by R. B. Neighbors, Sheriff of said County, and has qualified as the law directs, and that his official acts as such Deputy are entitled to full faith and credit.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE AT Fort Stockton, Texas, this 26th day of January A. D. 1903.

(Signed) W. A. Hadden
Clerk County Court,
Pecos Co., Texas"

(Seal—
County Court
Pecos County, Texas)



than be tamed!"

By FLORENCE FENLEY

YOU can see that I was prepared for trouble," Burris continued, "but I wasn't looking for any. The tales of the sheep men and cowmen troubles are another story, so we'll go on with the horses.

"Nothing on earth could so please an old cowboy as a good horse. Even when he got the girl he wanted, he kept looking for a better horse, and one never missed his eye. He knew horses like he did people, no two of them looked alike and he usually remembered a horse once he saw him. The only way he had of getting places was to have good horses, and a good horse was worth taking notice of.

"Naturally, we couldn't think of greater work than catching mustangs. We knew it was hard work and it meant a lot of running, but they were there for us and we liked to get them, for they made mighty good saddle animals.

"Hart never seemed to have too many horses. He bought every bunch of mares and colts he could hear of. Most anybody could sell him a bunch of horses, if they were not scrubs, of course. Our horse outfits worked our horses like the cow outfits worked cattle. We also would go out after mustangs and bring them into a bunch of gentle horses so we could handle them. Yes, we had to ride and fight them too, but we usually had them pretty well run down when we got them to the horse herd that was waiting. One time, had as many as 1,000 head of mustangs in one bunch; though of course we didn't pen that many. Whatever dropped out of the bunch, we let go and took the main band on. It would take several days sometimes to capture what we wanted, then we would brand out the mares and break the young horses. It pleased Hart when we made a big drive like that. He wanted horses on his range mainly because they ate the tall grass. Sheep wouldn't eat tall grass and the horses kept it down to where there was young, tender grass coming most of the time.

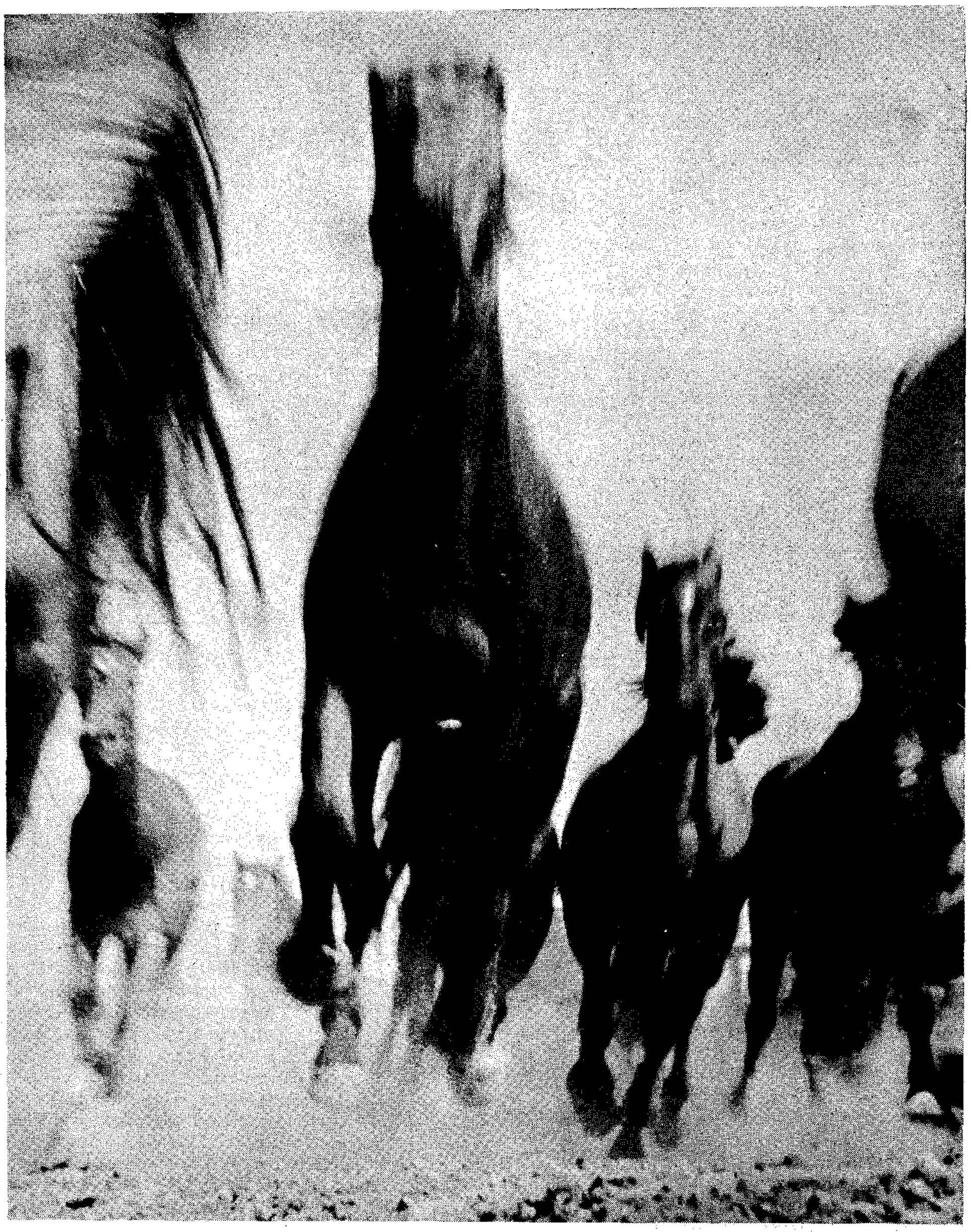
"We broke many a mustang in those days, and they made some of the best saddle horses I ever rode, for they had plenty of sense.

"After a year or two of catching mustangs, I began to want a certain band of paints I had seen now and then on the ridges. Every one was a red and white paint. I had seen the stallion on his lookout a number of times, and when the sun was in my favor, I got several good views of him. The other boys had seen him also, and we all agreed that he was the prettiest horse we had ever seen. I know I thought so. His mane and tail blew in the wind; his mane reaching nearly to his knees and his tail touched the ground. He was red and white like the rest of his band, but he was the most magnificent horse I had ever seen running wild, or tame either. Of course, I wanted him more and more.

"One fall, the horse outfit was working below Dryden in the Cedar Springs country where this band of paints ranged. We had our camp not far from the springs, and had just about finished up our horse work. The days were getting a feel of autumn and the nights were getting chilly. In other words, Indian summer had set in and it gave us a peppy feeling. We began to talk about that band of paints we had seen several times, and of nights before we rolled in, we found ourselves planning to get them. The boys had all noticed them and watched them, telling of this and that incident as we sat around the campfire at night. Every time we heard a panther scream in the distance and heard our horses prancing around and snorting, we hoped that another colt wasn't the victim. Panthers like colt meat and prey on young colts wherever they range. I have seen many a colt dead and half-eaten on the range, and it wasn't hard to tell what had killed them. Their mothers often came up with claw marks down their shoulders and sides too.

"We went to sleep every night with coyote and hoot owl music in our ears. There were lots of coyotes and lobos out there too, but horses didn't pay much attention to them; it took a panther to put them to flight.

WHEN the horse work was wound up, we got ready to capture that bunch of paints. We had to station our gentle horses at the head of a draw out of



"After a year or two of catching mustangs, I began to want a certain band of paints I had seen now and then running on the ridges, especially the stallion."

Johnny Burris, left, and the Rev. Bruce Roberts, old-time friends, talking over the good old days.

sight, when time came, so that when we ran the mustangs in that direction, they wouldn't have any way to keep from running right into the bunch. Our men all had their instructions; we were to run the mustangs in relays, thus saving our men and horses, too. Three or four of us were to jump them and start them toward the other men who were concealed and ready to take up the chase when the horses came by. They had all been on these chases before and knew exactly what to do, but this time—we were a little more excited than usual on account of that stallion we wanted.

"The morning we started out, we were up before daybreak and had breakfast. By good daylight, we four of us that were to start the mustangs were over in their range, each taking his station, and as luck would have it, I spotted them on the very ridge I was headed for. Don't ever think that stallion hadn't spotted me first! He stayed on his lookout for some time, though, as he had seen us pretty often during the horse works and didn't figure we were up to any more harm than we had been doing. When the idea struck him, though, that I might not be as innocent as I looked, he gave the signal and started his band for parts unknown. I lost them entirely for awhile, but in the distance, I saw that one of the boys had picked them up and was taking them on. They disappeared too quick to talk about. On they ran with each man giving chase until the next four men had taken over. Then the first four went on back to camp to be ready for our turn. We got fresh horses and rode out later on and kept those mustangs running. At night, we all came into camp and started again next day. No matter how far those mustangs run OFF their range, they would always come back to it.

"The next day it was the same story, each man running them till another man got into the chase with a fresh horse. But those poor mustangs never had time to rest or get a drink because of the relays of men and fresh horses that we kept after them. On the second day, some of the paints began dropping out, either from being run down or from being sore-footed. We never bothered with any of them that dropped out, but kept after the main band, never letting them rest.

"On the third day, more and more of those paints had dropped out. There had been about sixty head to start with, but the band was getting smaller and smaller. And they were so jaded they couldn't keep as far ahead as they had at first. By late afternoon, we were closing in on them and bringing them toward the head of the draw near Cedar Springs where the horse herd was. Most of the men were in the chase now because we knew they were having to give up. We crowded them now for the first time, and they were just about spent when we forced them into the head of the draw and right into the gentle horses. They weren't too hard to pen with the other horses, because they were too tired to make a getaway. Besides, there were only twenty out of the sixty. We had good stout pens and tall enough that they couldn't jump over, and we branded out the mares first of all. There were a few young horses we kept after we let the mares go, as we always broke the young horses for saddle horses.

"The next evening, we turned the wild ones out with the gentle horses to graze and get water and had enough men to guard them. We noticed that the stallion didn't eat a bite of grass, and grass was plentiful. Neither did he drink a mouthful of water. We thought he would starve himself to it, however, so we kept him up with the others. The next day, it was the same thing. He wouldn't eat nor drink. We kept thinking he would get back normal and would take to eating, but he wouldn't. I never saw a horse grieve so. His eyes were sunken by the third day and he looked bad, but in spite of his thirst, he was still a beautiful animal. There was no doubt but what his spirit was broken and his heart too, but we never realized that an animal could die from being captured until he actually died. It was on about the fourth or fifth day that he died; never a whimper from him or any more attempts to get away. His dejected appearance was something we all remembered with regret, for we would have turned him loose rather than see him die. We thought he would eventually eat and drink with the rest of the horses, but he fooled us—he'd rather die than be tamed! He gained his liberty in an entirely different way to what we had planned, and I took time to hope that he was wild and free again with only God to account to. From the way the boys all looked when he died, I am sure they were thinking the same things in their own way. The rest of the paints were coming along fine and made good saddle horses, but the prettiest horse I had ever seen lay dead at our feet."

In all his rounds, Johnny Burris never was broken up badly or lamed from bad falls. He marvels now that he isn't crippled some way and marvels more that boys will take the chances they do with life and limb, as he was always used to doing. He walks with a spring to his step, is ready to joke and laugh or get "down to business." He is the business man who broke horses when he was a boy for "a dollar a year," meaning a dollar for each year of the horses' ages. If a horse were a five-year-old, he got five dollars for breaking him; if a seven-year-old, he got seven dollars, etc. Horses didn't come too mean for him to try, and he won respect in the Horse Kingdom because of his success.

Johnny still lives at Brackettville and is still in business. He no longer breaks broncs or drives cattle, but that doesn't mean he no longer talks about those days. The biggest story about Johnny Burris hasn't been written yet. His days in Mexico, and other days in the Big Bend as a cow puncher, are dramas of the Western range as only Johnny could tell.

Horse Thief

(Continued from page 11)

"I don't reckon there was another spot on the globe that had as many tough characters, or where hoss stealin' flourished like it did in the late 1870's and 80's in Kansas. The country west of Dodge City became so infested with outlaws the citizens were compelled to take matters into their own hands. Judge Colt and his side-kick, Judge Lynch, divided honors on the bench. There wasn't any long-drawn-out court cases like you have these days. When a thief came before them judges, there was no reprieve granted, and he suffered the penalty for his misdeeds *muy pronto.*

"I knew most of them old rustlers like Dutch Henry, Tom Owens, Chubby Jones, and Ike Cramer. Dutch Henry, I reckon, was the best known. He was a smallish man, who, after serving as a scout for the old Seventh Cavalry of General Custer, turned against the Army and took up hoss stealin'. I heard he done it to get even with the officers for refusing to help him get back a band of ponies he claimed was stolen from him by the Injuns.

"The Dutch Henry gang worked a clever game; they had relay stations strung from Texas to Colorado. Hosses run off in Kansas were pushed from one homesteader's place to another until they got clear out of the state. Hosses stolen in Colorado and Nebraska got shifted west. Old Henry got so bold he set up a sales stable in Dodge, and if you asked for a hoss, he would ask first, Which way you was headin', east or west? If you was headin' west, he'd sell you a hoss that came from Nebraska or Colorado. If you were ridin' east, he'd pick out an animal and say, Take that one. His brand is good as long as you keep traveling in the right direction!

"There came a time when Dutch Henry was ordered out of Dodge, and in revenge he ran off some hosses that got him into a mess. Rounding up a posse, Emanuel Dobbs took their trail and ran 'em down west of Dodge. In the running fight that followed, Tom Owens was sentenced by Judge Colt along with a heap of his *compadres*. Old Dutch escaped, but packed a couple of slugs in his carcass as he lit out for Texas.

"Even the killing of Tom Owens and some of his cohorts didn't discourage the outlaws that got away. A few weeks later, a posse rounded up three fellers and hanged 'em in what is called Horse Thief Canyon just west of Dodge City. One of 'em proved to be a son of old Tom Owens; reckon hoss stealin' ran in the family.

"Cimarron, about eighteen miles west of Dodge, was the scene of a wholesale hangin' a short time later. The ranchers had formed a Vigilante Committee, and their spies had listed eleven men belonging to the hoss thief fraternity. My old man was the chief. He called a meeting one night and put eleven names into a hat. Each member of the Committee drew the name of a rustler, then picked himself a Vigilante comrade to side him in bringin' in his man.

"In pairs, the Vigilantes called on the hoss thieves, and before daylight ten of the rustlers were brought in to the rendezvous among the cottonwoods along the Arkansas River. Judge Lynch found them all guilty, and ten of the rustlers stretched hemp. Two Vigilantes failed to show up. Jim Wilson and his side-kick, Able Smith, had drawn the name of a jasper living a long way out on the prairie. The boys figured that they hadn't had time to make the return trip in darkness, and had likely holed up rather than be seen bringing in the man in daylight.

"WHEN the two Vigilantes failed to report with their prisoner by the next night, a searching party set out. They reached the sod-buster's dugout and found it empty as a last year's bird nest. Hoss tracks showed that three men had been there all right, but nary a sign could the posse discover as to which way they had headed. All three were single men, and as time passed they were soon forgotten.

"Most of them oldtimers pulled up stakes in 1889 and drifted over to Ingalls when the citizens of that town decided to get the county seat. There was a big fight between Ingalls and Cimarron over the county seat business, but Ingalls won out. Them fellers even moved the courthouse across the prairie to their town."

The old boy paused to take another belt at his liquor. "Were you a resident of Cimarron at the time the fight occurred?" I inquired.

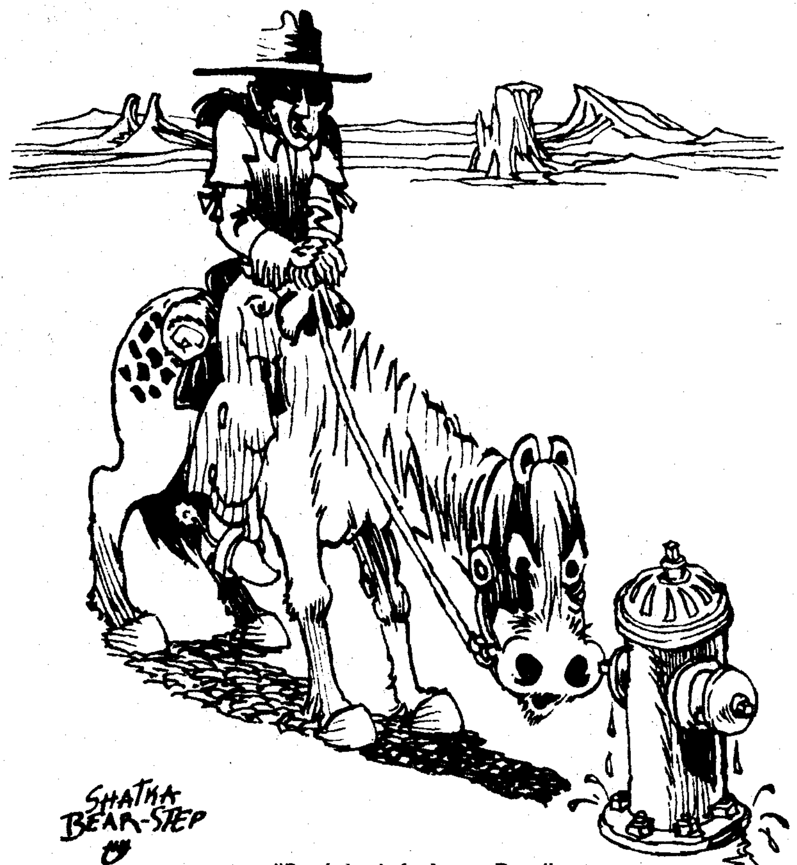
He looked at me slyly over the rim of his glass. "Hell, no! I'd pulled stakes long before that."

I tried another tack. "Wonder whatever became of those two jaspers, Wilson and Smith?"

My companion grinned. "Wilson and Smith skipped out along with the man they were sent after. You see, all three of them *hombres* happened to be members of the gang that was runnin' off hosses."

Emptying his glass, the oldster glanced furtively around the barroom, then leaned close and whispered, "Reason I knows this is *I* was one of the three! Savvy?"

I was too flabbergasted to comment. By the time I had recovered my aplomb, the old boy had slithered outside and disappeared.



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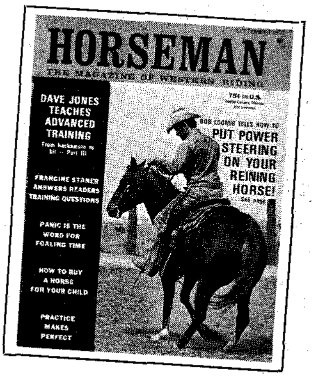
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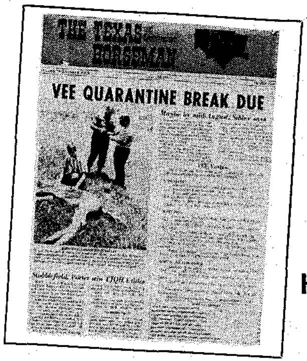

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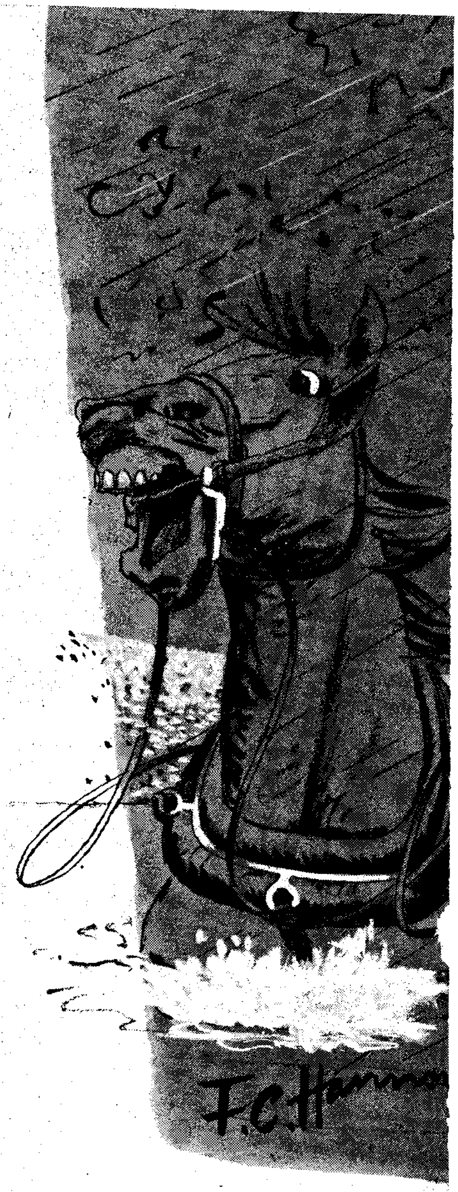
My father trailed the leader by a great distance, the course was muddy from the heavy rains that day. He knew it would take a desperate gamble if he was to have a chance at winning the

HARNESS RACE

By WALT COBURN



THE annual harness race, matched between my father's team and the teams of my brothers Bob, Will and Wallace, from the home ranch to the cow town of Malta, had been a tradition as far back as I could remember.

Each one of the men would put up a thousand dollars, winner take all. Every man on the ranch and the town citizens bet money each year that ran into a considerable amount.

That yearly harness race at the Circle C had become a sort of celebration that called for a holiday.

The first year that I was allowed to go along on the race, my brother Wallace was in Helena and would not be able to enter.

The day before the race I looked the horses over while I grained them in their stalls. There was little difference in their breeding and conformation. My father's Tucker bays (Nip and Tuck), Bob's Lewis and Clark—each bald-faced, stocking-legged chestnuts, and Will's seal-brown Roulette and Faro, each horse was sound as a dollar, sleek and beautiful, without a blemish, each conditioned for the long, gruelling, forty-five mile road race the next day.

Father's new top buggy had arrived a few days ago. It had been made to order by an Eastern firm, with every piece of wood carefully selected. The top and dashboard were of solid leather the color of gun metal, a special leather that wouldn't crack as it weathered. The tires were hard rubber instead of iron, and the hardwood wheels varnished to bring out the grain.

The next day, I remembered something Old Tom had told me a while back as he worked on Big Ned's feet: that a lot of horse races had been won or lost according to the condition of a horse's hoofs. So I went into the stall with Nip and Tuck, and lifting each hoof between my knees, I cleaned out the dirt and manure with a hoof pick. "Don't give us any alibis about pulling up lame," I told the Tucker bays as I slapped them on the rumps.

I knew if my father had seen me he would have ordered me out of the stall, but I'd been making up to Nip and Tuck when nobody had been around.

Meanwhile, Frank Howe and Joe Contway helped Will and Bob hook their teams to the buggies. Humpy Jack Davis and Pete Olsen held the horses' heads till Bob and Will got into the rigs.

Brewster and I held the Tucker bays while father climbed into the buggy seat and got a grip on the reins. Then I let go of Nip's bridle and scrambled over the front wheel into the seat beside my father.

Every man on the ranch was there to watch the start. When the three buggies were lined up, my father called out in a loud voice, "Turn loose! Let's go!"

WE were off in a cloud of dust, the three rigs all but hub to hub for a short distance. Then father let Bob and Will pull ahead to fight it out between them to see who would get to the one-way road first. It was like a three team runaway for a short while, every man for himself, and all were out for blood.

Bob cut in on two wheels and got the road by a narrow margin, almost piling the two buggies in a bad wreck. By the time we crossed Little Warm bridge, five miles from the starting line, the Tucker bays were a half mile behind in the dust.

"It's the last five miles that count," my father chuckled as he held his team down to a steady road trot.

It had been trying to rain for two weeks or more. The late July night had been sultry, and now the black thunderheads piled up behind the twin buttes were rumbling and sheet lightning smeared the heavy sky behind the Little Rockies.

We were nearing the halfway station called the Hog Ranch, when the storm hit. The whole sky, that had hung low overhead like an enormous black sack filled with water, let out a Noah's Ark flood. One minute the road ahead was filled with heavy dust, a minute later the deep wagon ruts were running muddy water. For a while we had to squint our eyes half shut to see the ears of the team as the wind whipped the rain against us.

My father wore a pair of new overalls over his suit pants to keep the dust off. I knew they would look like they had been left overnight in a tub of blueing when the dye ran. His white mustache and beard were wet, and before long he would look like the well-digger McGinty after he had just climbed up the well rope. I was getting plenty damp myself. The low sod-roofed log buildings of the Hog Ranch stage station loomed up ahead. Beyond Hog Ranch lay a mile or more of road known as the Red Lane, because of its red gumbo clay. In rainy weather it was the boggiest strip of road that ever mired a wagon to the hubs.

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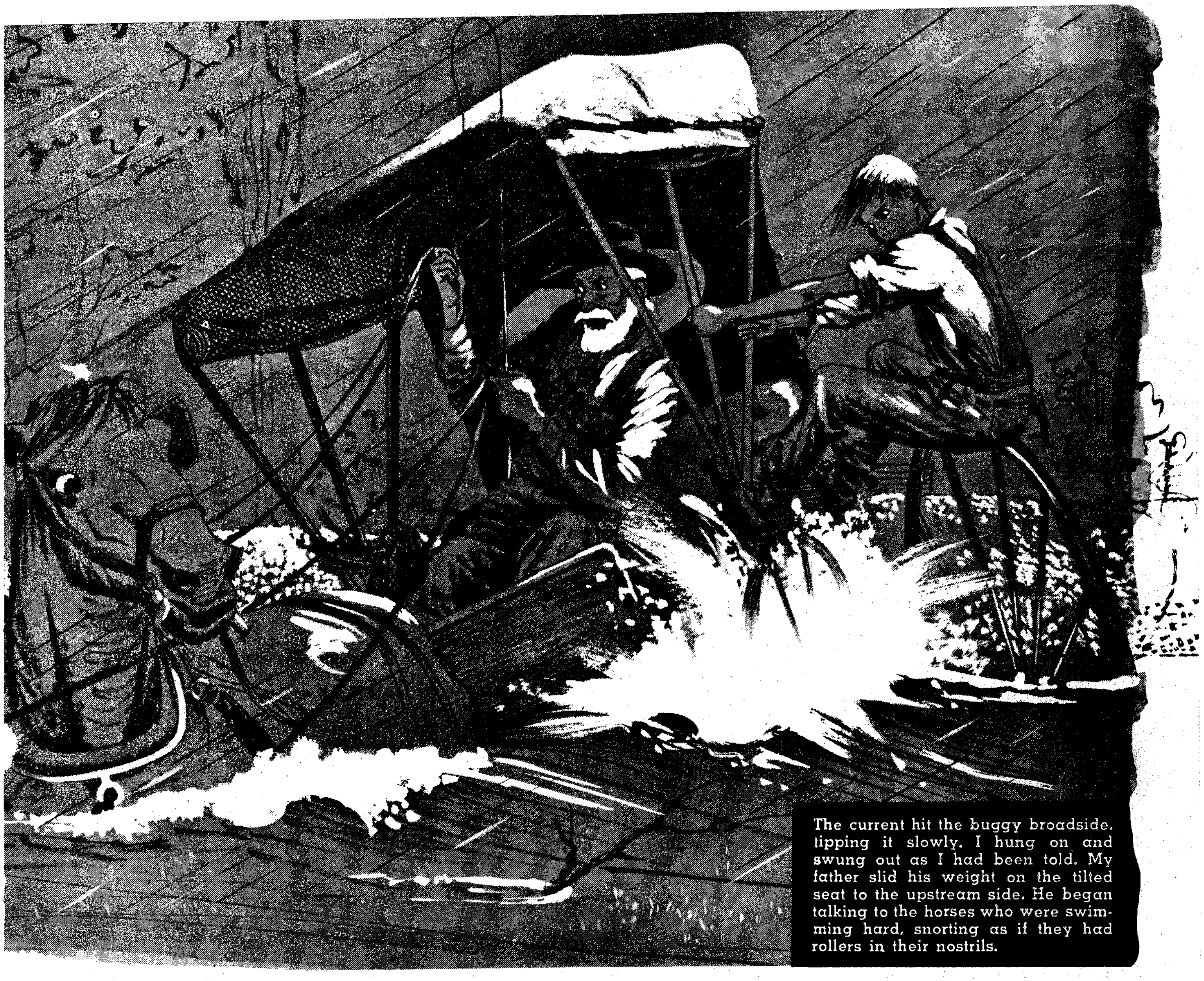
Charlie Whitcomb, a mining man and close friend of the family, was standing in the saloon doorway as we drove past to the log barn.

"Jump out and tie up the horses' tails," father told me. "And step lively."

With the help of the stock tender, who came out of the barn to lend a hand, we braided each tail in three plaits, then twisted the braid up and around and knotted it above the hocks so it couldn't come loose. It was a makeshift job but it would do to keep the long tails from balling up with sticky gumbo.

Whitcomb came over wearing a slicker, which he took off and made my fa-



The current hit the buggy broadside, tipping it slowly. I hung on and swung out as I had been told. My father slid his weight on the tilted seat to the upstream side. He began talking to the horses who were swimming hard, snorting as if they had rollers in their nostrils.

Illustrated by Francis C. Hannon

ther put on. He took a silver-cased stop watch from his vest pocket and said, "Bob's seven minutes and twenty seconds in the lead. You're five minutes and forty-two seconds behind Will."

"You got any money down, Charlie?" father asked.

"Five hundred on Bob," Whitcomb grinned, then said, "That cloudburst caught Bob's rig at the far end of the Red Lane ahead. Will's team was caught in the broad middle, far enough in so he couldn't turn around, and they're sloggin' through the gumbo hock deep." Whitcomb shrugged his bulky shoulders and made a sort of hopeless gesture with his hands.

"With a mile of red gumbo churned up like it is, you'll bog that bay team down to the ears. That cloudburst throwed you the race, Mr. Coburn. From the Red Lane to Malta it'll be a matched race between Bob and Will, if Will gets through."

"Wipe the grin off your face, Whitcomb," father snapped. "I got five hundred that says the Tucker bays get my rig to Malta in the lead. Money talks the only language in a hoss race," he snapped, blue sparks glinting in his eyes.

I gave the tied-up tails a final yank to make sure they were tight and scrambled back into the buggy as father backed the team.

"It's a bet!" Whitcomb called out as the front wheels cramped in a tight turn.

THE rain had let up enough to see the length of muddy red gumbo ahead, the ditches on each side filled with water. A rig had to stay in the ruts or tip over into six feet of water. With Will's rig crawling the ruts ahead it seemed worse than hopeless for us to tackle it. The rain closed in like a gray blanket now.

Without saying a word, my father swung Nip and Tuck off the road just before we reached the Red Lane, and headed across country, twisting between clumps of brush. I got busy and buckled down the side curtains.

"Five miles," my father said as if talking to himself. "About five miles around. We'll give them that for boot. Hit the gravel crossing on Wild Horse Creek. It'll be touch and go. Wild Horse will flood its banks directly and we got to race against time." The buggy whip hissed a foot or so above the team and they lengthened out, the rig bouncing.

"Take a look in the jockey box," my father told me. "See what's there that can be used to cut a wire fence."

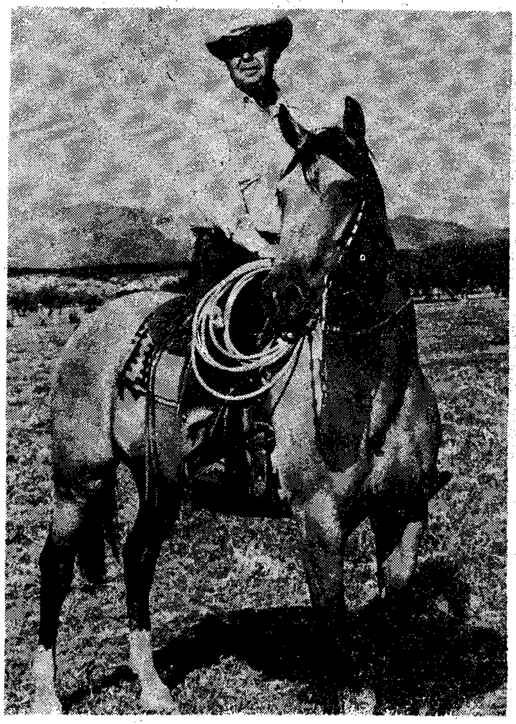
I found an old pair of long-handled nippers used to trim horses' hoofs, and when we came to B. D. Phillips' sheep fence near the crossing on Wild Horse, I jumped out and cut the wire close to the posts. It was a five-strand fence of twisted barbwire and it took all my strength to do the cutting.

When I climbed back in, my father had taken off his slicker. He told me to roll up the side curtains.

He pulled up at the edge of a thirty-foot stretch of muddy water running bank to bank, and I walked out along the wagon tongue to release the check reins, talking to Nip and Tuck as I crept forward, a hand on each horse's back.

Swimming a stream in a top buggy was a new experience for me. I learned to swim the Missouri River when I was so high and I had no fear for myself. But I was afraid for my father, for I knew he couldn't swim a stroke.

"Stay on your side of the seat," father instructed me. "Hang onto the side brace. The buggy will tip sideways when



Walt Coburn was born at White Springs, Montana, in 1889. In the summers he rode his father's Circle C range in Montana. He had but one idea during these years—to become a top cowhand.

we reach swimming water, so lean out as far as you can. If we turn over, let go and strike out for shore. You'll be on your own. I'll have my hands full with the team."

I looked at him and asked, "Can you swim?"

"You don't need to swim if you know how to handle a team in water," he said. He brought the whip down across the rumps of both horses' standing stiff-legged, reluctant to take the swift-running water. Now they snorted and hit the collars and lunged belly-deep.

THE current hit the buggy broadside, tipping it slowly. I hung on and swung out as I had been told. My father slid his weight on the tilted seat to the upstream side and the buggy came back slowly on even keel. He began talking to the horses who were swimming hard, snorting as if they had rollers in their nostrils. "Steady . . . steady now . . . steady boys . . ." There was no fear in his calm, even-toned voice as he handled the reins gently, knowing that a horse will come over backwards in swimming water if there is any hard pull on his mouth.

A few minutes later the horses struck gravel and dug in, hauling the buggy up the slant on the far bank. When the rig was on solid ground, we pulled up, to wind the horses.

I walked out on the tongue again to fasten the check reins while father was making up his mind whether to go back to the road or cut across country some more.

"We'll head straight across," he made his decision aloud. And we were off again, bouncing over brush and boulders, down cutbanks and up slants.

We were a good fifteen miles or more from Malta and we had gone five miles out of our way. That five miles had used up time, but we were still in the race.

The rain had cooled out the grain-fed bays and in spite of the heavy going, they reached out for all they had when we got back on the road.

I kept watching ahead to catch sight of the other two rigs, but after an hour and no sign of them I started getting worried. By the time we reached West Alkali bridge I gave up all hope of overtaking them. I began to feel the chill of my wet clothes and my teeth were chattering. I could tell my father was bone cold by the pinched look on his face, but he never let on.

We were within five miles of Malta when we sighted a rig ahead. "There's one of 'em," I shouted. "Half a mile ahead."

"We'll take care of that half mile, directly." My father clucked at the team and shook out the lines a little and the bays lengthened their stride. "It ain't time to ask 'em yet," he said. "Watch their tails."

There was a two mile stretch of road across a wide flat strip of benchland. I watched the tied-up tails that father said were sure indicators of whatever reserve strength was left in a horse on a gruelling trip. If the tails had been tied to short broomsticks they couldn't have been straighter.

The Tucker bays sighted the rig ahead as quickly as we had. I swear those two horses looked at each other and swapped a couple of words of horse talk, because they let out another notch of their own accord. I heard my father chuckle as he looked to see if I'd noticed. I tried to get a grin on my face, but if it was as mud-spattered as his, it must have looked like a cracked mud pie.

The buggy ahead was Will's. As we came up even I saw the red smear in his thick black hair and the blood on his face. One side of the buggy looked caved in, both side curtains had been ripped off, and a ragged hole showed in the patent leather top. Roulette and Faro's brown coats were mud spattered, the buggy plastered with sticky gumbo. and Will looked like he had taken a mud bath.

"Schoolhouse Coulee bridge washed out from under me!" he yelled as he reined off the road to let us pass. "Bob's somewhere ahead! Pass him and I'll buy you a chicken dinner!" He waved the buggy whip in salute as we showered him with muddy water from a big puddle in the middle of the road.

As we rounded a bend in the road within a mile of town, we sighted Bob's rig. We had a fifty-yard gap to close and button up fast. My father reached for the whip.

"HAH! Hah! Hah!" The short words barked at the team with a startling sound like dry sticks snapping. It was as if he had jabbed them with a prod pole.

Bob couldn't see us coming because his rear window was mud-plastered and he was too busy getting the last licks out of Lewis and Clark.

There was a straightway hundred yards of sagebrush flat ahead and beyond that two pasture fences made a narrow lane. We had to beat Bob to the lane, so father quit the road and took to the brush.

"Hah, hah!" The Tucker bays reached out, the buggy bouncing and jolting on three wheels, tipping sideways with two wheels spinning in the air, then bouncing back on all four wheels.

The two teams were neck and neck—Bob not giving an inch of the muddy road as he laid the whip across the rumps of the mud-covered chestnut team.

"Make your bid," father's voice sounded in my ear. "Ask 'em! Ask 'em!"

"Nip!" I hollered. "Tuck! Pick 'em up!" I let out an Indian yip and almost bit off my tongue as the rig bounced over a clump of brush. We were past Bob's rig and coming to the narrow lane. I cut a quick look back as father reined onto the road and saw Bob pull on the lines to keep from piling up. In the distance Will's rig seemed to be gaining ground fast.

Nip and Tuck were wide open now. The rear wheel on my side grazed the corner post as we passed into the lane.

A quarter mile ahead was the cow town of Malta. Two rain-washed, red brick, two-story buildings loomed up. They were the Great Northern Hotel and Trafton's Store that marked the finish line. The wide dirt street was a mud puddle lake.

It was that last quarter mile, the final lap of the grueling forty-five mile harness race, that would tell the tale. The only difference between the three buggy teams, almost identical in conformation, with equal breeding and pedigreed bloodline, was the proverbial difference of opinion that makes for a matched race.

Will's Roulette and Faro had crept up on Bob's Lewis and Clark sorrels. Father's Tucker bays were no more than a buggy length ahead when we came into the homestretch. It was still any man's race, and this was the supreme test of game-hearted horses and skilled drivers.

The three rigs hit that last hundred yard stretch of muddy water wide open.

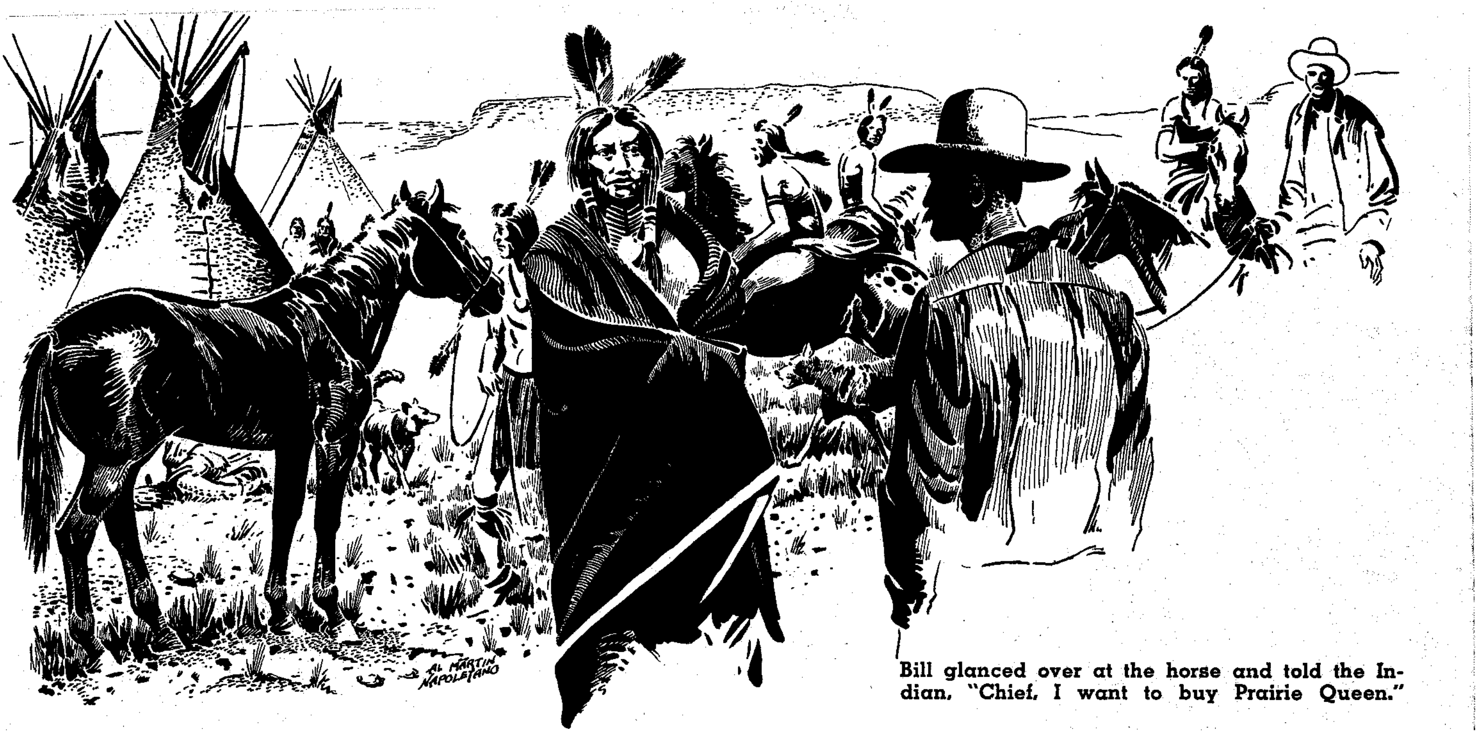
It looked like every man in Malta was in the milling crowd that shoved and elbowed on the wide plank walks on either side of the street, heedless of the drizzle. And each man must have had a bet down the way everyone hollered and yelled at the tops of his lungs, to bring in the team he had bet on. The roar of the milling crowd swelled up and came at us like rolling thunder.

The westbound had just pulled in at the crossing. The train crew must have seen what was going on, for the wail of the locomotive whistle and the clang of the engine bell added to the din.

THE three rigs were abreast now, almost hub to hub on the wide street; less than a hundred yards to go. Mud chunks and water sprayed out on all sides. The mud coating made the horses all one color. The buggies and drivers were mud-splattered. Horses and rigs and men last identity. This was it; the final test.

My father's loud shout lifted above the confusion of noise. "Hah! Hah! Hah!" The long black buggy whip whistled a warning a foot above the wet backs of the team, back and forth, back and forth, as it slashed the drizzle, the water almost hub-deep.

The Tucker bays reached out, every muscle, every tendon strained to the utmost, giving the last of the strength that was rock-bottom reserve, racing their hearts out. *(Continued on page 50)*



Bill glanced over at the horse and told the Indian, "Chief, I want to buy Prairie Queen."

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

Bill Tilghman's "Prairie Queen"

By HOMER CROY

Everything was going great until Bill found that he was bargaining with the old Indian chief for something besides horse flesh!

THIS IS A STORY that George W. Bolds told me. In Dodge City he was known as "Cimarron George." I made notes, wrote the story and have his corrections. He died four years ago. He was, for a time, a deputy United States marshal in Dodge City. James D. Horan wrote a book about him, but this story does not appear in the book, and is set down here for the first time.

This is the story about the way colorful "Cimarron George" told it. I wish I could catch the rhythm of his voice and the laughter in his faded blue eyes. The story:

I GUESS YOU didn't know that Bill Tilghman—one of "The Three Guardsmen"—liked race horses the way a coon likes persimmons. His specialty was to pick 'em up from the Indians who were mighty good judges of moving horse-flesh. He bought one from a Kiowa Indian named White Deer—horse was named "Chief." Bill owned another horse named "Chant." This animal won the Kentucky Derby in 1894. I guess that will come in the nature of a surprise to many people—Bill Tilghman owning a Derby winner!

I knowed Bill Tilghman well. He was as fine a man as ever hung a holster around his hips. Here's a trait I want to mention; he was downright shy around girls. Bad men didn't make him even blink, but a girl gave him the shakes. Seems queer, but that was the way it was.

One day in the fall of 1883 he invited me to leave Dodge City and go down into the Indian Territory with him to attend an annual feast the Indians was gettin' up. It appears they always had 'em along in the fall of year which, to Indians, is hoss racing time.

If there is anything an Indian likes next to firewater it's a horse race. Bill heard about a Comanche Indian chief who had a fast black filly named "Prairie Queen." Bill and I went to see her run. She was the fastest thing on four feet. When Bill saw her in action his eyes glowed like coals in a base-burner stove.

She was rode by an Indian boy with only a hackamore, no saddle, no bridle. She could understand Indian. You know what I mean.

We saw her start in a field of fifteen; the Indian boy on her back, a hackamore over her head. She came in first.

Bill got more and more excited. "I'm goin' to buy 'Prairie Queen,'" he said.

He had $500 in his wallet. He took out $300 and gave it to me and told me to hold it, then put the wallet back in his pocket.

When the race was over, Bill went to the Indian and said, "Chief, I want to buy Prairie Queen!" He glanced over to where the horse was standing.

An Indian likes to dicker, and now the chief got a horse-blanket and spread it on the ground, him settin' on one side, and Bill Tilghman on the other, facin' each other.

"How much you pay?" asked the chief.

Bill done a little play-actin'. He took out his wallet and pulled out $50 and kind of hesitatingly spread it on the horse-blanket, as if the idea of letting loose of that much money was painful to him.

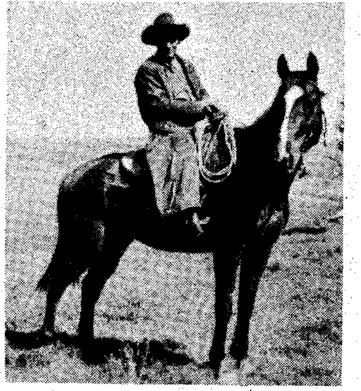
The chief looked at it a long time, then silently shook his head.

Bill eased out a ten dollar bill and put it down. The chief studied it, and again shook his head.

Bill's hand went into his wallet again and came out with ten dollars more. By the look of agony on his face, you'd a thought he'd been bit by a prairie rattler.

Little by little the two got closer together in their bid-an'-asked. Finally—with a look of despair—Bill opened up his purse and put everything in it on the pile, then showed the purse to the chief. "That's all I'll give for her," said Bill.

(Continued on page 52)



Lee S. Badgett

A Cactus Saddle

BY LEE S. BADGETT

as told to H. Crosby Badgett

He'd done some bragging about riding a "cactus saddle." Then came a black, stormy night when he found himself a-straddle of one

Illustrated by B. D. Titsworth

I guess I was as cocky as any other young cowpoke—especially when I'd had a few too many. Then when folks asked me where I was from, I'd give 'em a long spiel. It went something like this:

"I come from a tough country. Come down the creek a-riding a grizzly bear with a cactus saddle, packing a bobcat under each arm and using a rattlesnake for a quirt. But, back home, the tough guys run me out!"

I'd about forgot that old spiel till a while back when I run into a feller in Miles and we got to swapping stories over our beer about the CBC outfit.

The CBC (Chapple Brothers) was a horse outfit. They run out of Miles City, Montana, on the North Side. They was running about ten thousand head of horses when I hawked for them. That was in 1933, hot and dry as hell.

I'd worked for cow outfits and I'd broke a lot of horses, but I'd never worked on a horse outfit before that. My Dad always raised good horses, and so did all our neighbors. Every year, the buyers for cavalry horses would come around and me and my brother would be busy snapping out broncs and showing them. Then, usually, after the horse business was done, I'd get me a job with some cow outfit. But in the spring of '33 we heard that the CBC was paying forty a month, and that was ten bucks more than the cow outfits was paying. Kirk and me didn't lose much time heading for Miles.

Sid Vollin, the CBC foreman, gave Kirk a job as a regular hand and me a job hawking. There was only one day-wrangler, but there was two of us night-hawks. Old Jeff Nix was the other one. About the first of June we set out on the roundup north from Miles City.

Here in our country when we say the North Side, we mean all the way from the Yellowstone to the Big Mizoo (Missouri). Now that's a damn big country, and during the late 1920's and early '30's it was pretty much open. You could ride for miles without hitting a fence. Later on, that fact was to save my hide.

I was pretty much lost in that country. Where I was raised, we run our cattle on the forest and I knowed every tree, hill, and side-draw. But the North Side had me plumb twisted around; I just couldn't seem to locate any landmarks. The country is open and bare, and one big hill looks just like another. But I always managed to find my way into camp in the morning, especially since Jeff was good about helping me to get located each night. He'd rode the same country with the CBC wagon before, and he took a liking to me and helped me all he could.

By the middle of June we'd worked over to the Stellar Reservoir, about thirty miles north of Forsyth. It was hot that morning, and the sky had a queer brassy look when I bedded down in the hawks' tent. When I woke up in the afternoon, I saw that Jeff's bed was empty and I knowed damn well he'd got up because it was too hot to sleep. I rolled me a cigarette and laid there a spell. But it was too hot and sticky to grab another nap, so I rolled out, too.

When I stepped outside the tent, I saw Jeff talking serious-like to old George Helm, the cook. George had the flaps of the cook-tent open so he could get a little air. He was fussing over his pots and pans and cussing the little swirls of dust the wind kicked up.

I walked over to them. Jeff pointed to the sky and said, "Look at them clouds piling up over there, Lee. Looks like we might have a peck of trouble holding our horses tonight if she blows up a good thunderstorm."

Big black clouds was banking up in the northwest. I looked at the clouds and back at the reservoir. There was a fence running across the shallow end of the reservoir on the west. It swung along the south side, then curved right back below the dam at the east end. That fence formed a neat little pasture between it and the reservoir along its south side. I got an idea.

"Look, Jeff," I said. "Can't we *hold* the cavvy inside that fence?"

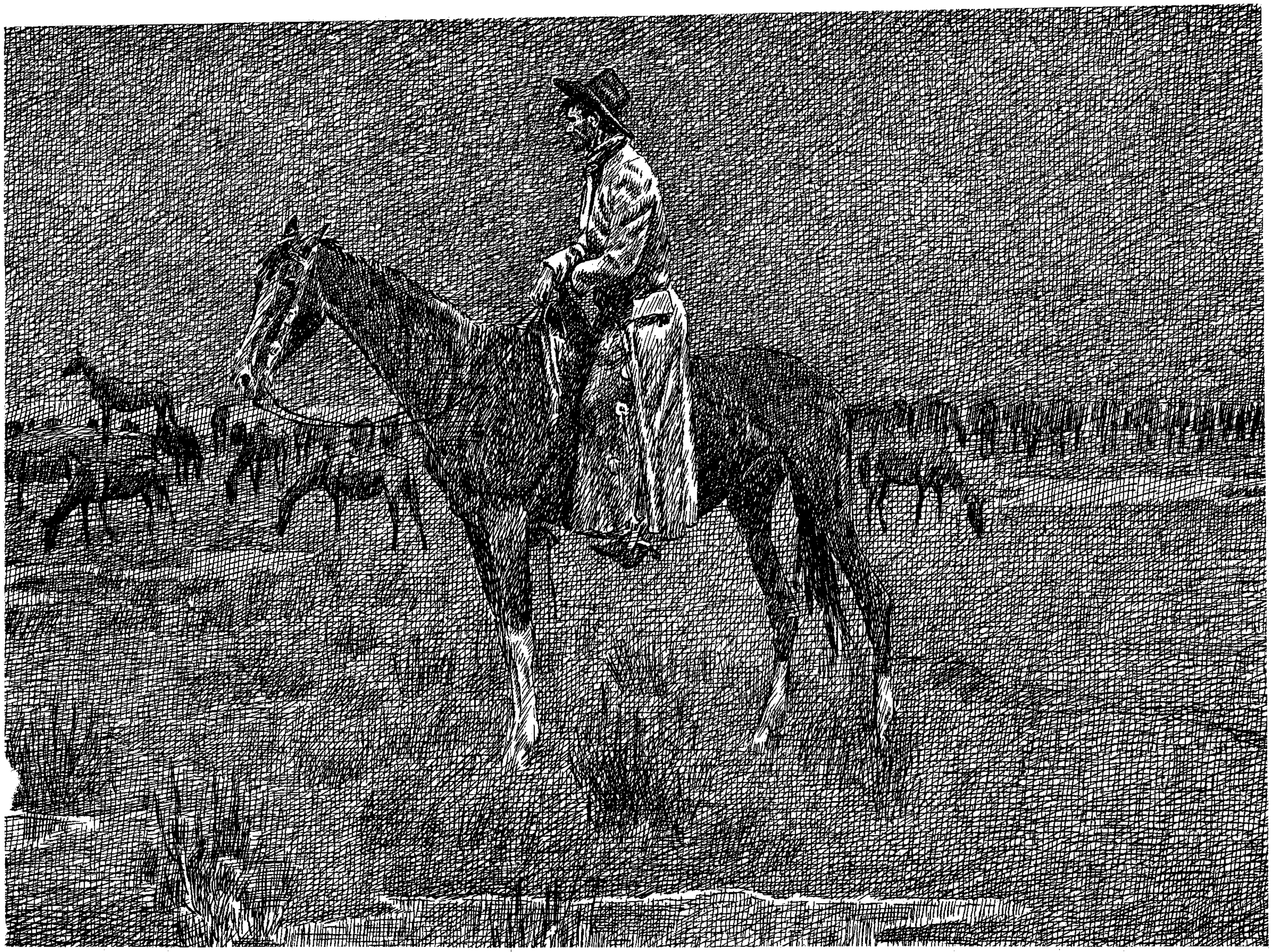
Jeff studied the fence a minute. "I reckon so. I'll stay at the west end to keep them from making a run around the fence in the shallow water." He looked straight at me. "Lee, do you think you can hold 'em at the dam end, in case they spook?"

I nodded. I'd sure try, and that was all anybody could do.

The sticky heat had Jeff nerved up as I was, and I knowed it. The clouds wasn't building up very fast and the air was still, except for them little whirlwinds that kept blowing dirt into old George's cooking pots and giving him fits. We wouldn't a-been so worried if the storm had been building up faster. Then there'd a-been a good chance it would be all done and blowed over before dark.

DURING supper all the hands kept watching that threatening sky and watching Jeff and me. They was laying bets on how many horses we'd have left by morning. The boys that was going to night guard the horse herd on the north side of the reservoir didn't have much to say. I knowed they was all wishing they didn't have to be on guard that night. We had 296 head of horses in the cavvy. Part of them belonged to reps who was sent from other outfits to ride with us, but the big end was CBC horses. The horse herd, mostly mares and colts, would have tallied about 330 head. They was partly reps' horses too, but mostly CBC.

Sid asked Jeff and me where we was figuring on holding the cavvy, and nodded in agreement when we told him. If



I even felt like I might be riding that cactus saddle I'd bragged about.

he was worried, that poker face of his never showed it.

I roped a little chestnut horse to ride that night. He was a nervy little devil with a lot of heart, and I hoped he'd come through for me. If he didn't—well, there was no damn sense borrowing trouble.

The day-wrangler turned the cavvy over to us about eight o'clock and we pushed them across the dam into the little pasture. Jeff rode off toward the west end of the fence, shouting "Good luck!" over his shoulder. I rode Chesty a few feet out onto the dam, rolled a cigarette and waited. I've never felt so alone in my life—before or since.

The clouds was making it get dark fast now, and the gusts of wind was stronger. The mares in the horse herd with their colts was fidgeting, wanting to get back to their home ranges. The cavvy horses was rolling their eyes nervous-like at the fence, hearing the wires a-singing a tune in the wind. I could just make out Sid, still sitting in front of the cook-tent, nursing a cup of coffee and watching the sky. While I looked that way, old George come out of the tent with the lighted lantern and hung it on the corner of the tent like he did every night. I felt better, seeing that friendly yellow gleam. Chesty hunkered down on a hind leg, and we waited.

By now the sheet-lightning was putting a right fancy show in the northwest, but it was show I didn't much like. I rolled a fresh cigarette and took a deep drag. The smoke like to choke me down, and I discovered my throat was all tied up in a knot. Then I tried to swallow—and found out I didn't have any spit. That was when I knew just how scared I was. I hauled out my watch to check the time, but the wind was blowing so hard I couldn't nurse a match-flame long enough to see the dial.

The horses on both sides of the reservoir was milling now and nickering anxiously once in a while. I could hear a rep, standing night guard with the herd, cussing a blue streak at both horses and weather. Then a bolt of lightning hit right near the horse herd, followed instantly by a crash of thunder.

A yearling colt started to run, and the rep, still cussing without losing a breath, jumped his horse out after it. He got it turned back and it ran right on into the reservoir, making a hell of a racket with its splashing. The noise spooked the cavvy so they all wheeled away from the fence and headed for the dam.

I gouged my spurs into Chesty and headed out across the dam in their lead. My hands was shaking, but I managed to fumble my lariat loose and I swung it like a bull-whip, trying to keep them off the dam and get them milling. Some of them dodged past me, hitting Chesty and bruising my legs. More was coming, and Chesty was shaking life a leaf. I don't know what I yelled, but I hollered something and touched him with the spurs. He came out of it, running like a bat out of hell trying to get in the lead of them again.

We overtook some of them streaking horses in front, and they wheeled back toward the rest of the cavvy. That spooked the whole bunch into the fence below the dam.

Podner, I hope you never hear barbwire screaming and posts thundering while 300 head of horses tears right through a fence! It scares a man so that he never forgets.

Them horses streaked down that fence line with me and Chesty right behind. Lightning struck near them again, and they wheeled and went right back through that fence. Chesty set his hind feet and spun around. I couldn't hold him now; he'd just naturally decided to save his own hide from that mess of panicky horses. So now we was riding out in their lead. I screwed myself down in the saddle and hoped Chesty wouldn't pick up a hole.

We swept out across the flat, heading for the hills. The cavvy was following us across sagebrush and cactus. There was prairie-dog holes and washouts, too, but they was running just as fast as if they'd been on a right fancy race-track. Chesty flattened his body every time he took a long leap ahead, so I could feel the sagebrush rushing up at me. The cavvy pounded along at Chesty's heels.

That little chestnut horse wasn't long-legged, but he was stretching out like a thoroughbred there in the dark to stay ahead of that thundering cavvy. Man, it was like we was leading a cavalry charge!

Pretty soon we gained some ground, and the cavvy dropped back a little. I chanced a quick look back. I could just make out a tiny glimmer of light that was the lantern on the cook-tent. It must have been two or three miles behind us, so we was better than halfway to the divide. The horses was heading for high ground, following their instinct to get away from dangerous low land during a storm.

THEY settled down to a steady lope behind us. Another couple of miles put us on the side of a hill, climbing. The cavvy slowed to a trot, and finally to a walk. Still, I had a little trouble getting them to stop. The older horses were willing to stop and graze, but the young horses was still nerved up. Every minute or so, a horse would raise his head and nicker for his own special pal. His pal would answer, and all would be quiet for a bit.

Half an hour crawled by. The young horses quieted down and began to graze. I figured they was all through running for the night, but I didn't relax much. Lightning still flashed and there were a few spits of rain now and then. Once or twice I spotted the faint glimmer of light that was the cook-house lantern. It sure was a welcome sight, cause I hated to think of getting lost.

I'd smoked two cigarettes and got my jangled nerves calmed down a mite when all hell busted loose again. I never knew what started them that time. They just broke and run, heading for the top of the hill.

I was on the uphill side of them when they started, so I jumped Chesty out fast and was still in the lead when we hit the top of the divide. They was travelling just as fast and panicky as they had been the first time. I don't know how Chesty stood the pace or how he managed to keep his feet. We seemed to be on a well-worn trail, smack on top of a badlands hogback. By flashes of lightning I could see we was in plenty rough territory and it scared me worse than if I couldn't a-seen it at all. The lead horse in the cavvy had his nose right on Chesty's tail, so I knowed damn well I wouldn't have as much chance as a snowball in hell if Chesty stumbled. What scared me even more was the fact that I was lost in strange country.

The lead horse dropped back and the cavvy settled into a steady lope. Chesty heaved a sort of sigh of relief and slowed down, too. I was getting kind of groggy by now, but I could feel a difference in the bunch of horses following us. Then I could hear horses going off down a side trail.

I pulled around and tried to herd the ones still following us off the side of the hill with the others. They kept slipping by me. I figured most of them had followed the side trail, so I decided to follow *them* and let the others go. I was still figuring on getting back to camp with most of the cavvy, even though I didn't know where camp was.

ALL I could do was to follow where they led me till daylight. The horses settled into a jog-trot, on and on, through the roughs. Chesty jogged right along behind. The little horse was plumb tired, but he didn't quit. I'd stopped worrying about the sure-footed little cuss falling into a hole, and sort of loosened up my muscles.

I wondered what time it was, but had no way of finding out in the dark. I kept wishing for daylight. Now that I wasn't scared any more I ached all over and felt that I'd been in that saddle all my life. I even felt like I might be riding that cactus saddle I'd bragged about.

The lightning finally quit, but the sky was still inky-black with only a few stars showing. The Big Dipper was hid, so I couldn't tell what direction I was following.

We finally got out of the roughs into some gently rolling hills just before sunup. I was plumb tickled to see dawn break. I discovered we was taking a northeasterly trail, and that we had less than a hundred head of horses. They was all quiet now and had slowed to a walk. I left them to graze, and headed for the top of a fairly high hill right near us.

From the top of the hill I scanned the country in all directions, hoping to spot some ranch buildings. About two miles down a creek sat a ranch, pretty as you please. I took a quick look at the horses. They was scattered out, grazing peacefully. We started off the hill for the ranch. Chesty seemed to sense where we was headed. He pricked up his ears and set off in a tight little jog.

There was a man at the well when we rode into the ranch. I croaked a "Good morning."

"You're out kind of early," he said. "Had breakfast?"

He handed me a rusty dipper of water. I gulped some of it, and it burned like hot coffee. My throat was so raw I couldn't drink much. I led Chesty over to the trough and let him sip a little water. I led him away from the trough before I explained to the rancher about the jackpot I was in.

"Son," he said, "you'd better come in and have some breakfast. You're a good twenty-five miles from your camp, as the crow flies."

I shook my head. "No, the boys need the horses. If it's only twenty-five miles, I can make it back by nine or ten o'clock—if you'll tell me which way to go."

WHEN I left the little ranch, my head was buzzing. I kept repeating the rancher's careful directions over to myself, to be sure I had 'em straight.

The next few hours were kind of hazy. I headed the horses back along the divide on an old wagon road, but I must have dozed in the saddle. The horses took the wrong turn off the divide and headed down the creek, and I was following them.

About five miles down the creek we ran into a sheep camp. The herder told me I was on Lone Tree Creek, twenty-two miles from Stellar Reservoir. I'd sure messed up my estimated time schedule. I gave Chesty another sip of water, feeling pretty mean for not letting the game little horse drink his fill. But—if I wanted to get back to camp on him—I didn't dare let him tank up. It was only about eight o'clock, but the heat was already bearing down. It was going to be another scorcher of a day.

Back along the divide we went, the slow-moving cavvy staying not too far ahead of Chesty. I didn't dare push him out of a walk. He had already given me all he had. He was so tired I felt plumb sorry for him. I figured he was ruined, burnt out.

I looked at the cavvy and thought, *if I could only catch me a fresh horse.* It would have to be a gentle one, though, or I'd never get the cavvy back to camp. My first loop would have to be a sure catch, because if I throwed once and missed, they'd never let me close enough to throw again.

My shoulder muscles was tired and prickly—good for one loop and that was about all. One of Sid's string, Fade Away, was fairly near me. He was grazing along as he walked. I got my loop ready and eased Chesty up, waiting for him to raise his head. Oh, that dirty b-----d, if only he'd had horns like a steer, it would have been a sure catch. As 'twas, he saw the loop coming and ducked his head.

I felt lower than a skunk in a badger burrow—and then Chesty pricked up his ears. The other horses was looking, too. There lay the camp, about five miles ahead of us, looking like an anthill on the flat. You could barely see it through the shimmering noon sun. And then, suddenly, right there beside me was one of the boys a-pounding me on the shoulders till I near fell out of the saddle.

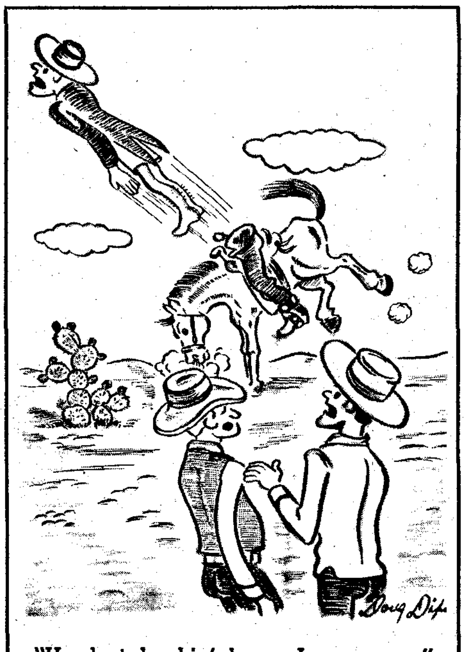
I grinned at him and asked: "Jeff? Is he all right?"

"Sure, he stayed at camp when the stampede started. He gathered quite a bunch of the horses right around camp this morning. Sid's got all the boys out looking for you. I'll take the cavvy in and tell 'em you're safe. You take your time coming in. That Chesty's some horse, ain't he?"

I could only nod and grin. He let out a whoop and went fogging off the hill toward camp with the cavvy. I nursed Chesty along, until, a long time later, I heard old George hollering at me. He was standing in front of the cook-tent, grinning and waving the coffee-pot.

"You're late for dinner, boy! Don't you know it's nigh onto two o'clock?"

Nothing this side of heaven will ever taste as good again as that first cup of coffee!



"Hardest buckin' horse I ever saw."

"Greatest Pinto Ever Born, Him!"

By LEWIS A. LINCOLN

In the flurry of the blizzard, Big Bat couldn't see, and with frozen feet and fingers, he couldn't move. His fate lay in the pony's persistence

Author's note: Baptiste Pourier, foster son of the famed Sioux chief Red Cloud, came west on foot at fourteen in the year 1854. In 1856, while working for two mining prospectors, Carol Woods and Captain Basset, the sixteen-year-old dumped the first load of logs to build a cabin for the Denver Trading Post. And so began the present Colorado capital on the banks of Cherry Creek, then in Kansas territory. The young Frenchman rode with Frank Grouard and Buffalo Bill in the Indian wars of the seventies and eighties. He spoke five Indian dialects and Indian sign language.

I knew this famous old plainsman ten years, 1914 to 1924. He was a devout Catholic and a true Christian gentleman, modest and reliable. He did not read or write English, but did so in French. Years ago, when I submitted him as the real founder of Denver, I received this comment from the then Bureau of Municipal Facts: "The old gentleman is undoubtedly right."

FORTY years ago, when I was living on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, I knew Baptiste Pourier. In General Crook's writings, he is referred to as "Big Bat the Scout."

Crook had two Baptistes on his scouting staff, Baptiste Pourier and Baptiste Garnier. He called the first, "Big Bat," and the other one, "Little Bat." Pourier was a rugged and lean Frenchman six-feet-two, while Baptiste Garnier, also French, was just a shade over five feet. At times, Big Bat served as chief of Indian scouts under Crook.

At the time I knew him, he was living a quiet life on his own ranch on Wounded Knee Creek, just about twenty-five miles down the creek from the scene of the last tussle between the army and the Sioux—the well-known "Battle of Wounded Knee." Big Bat, who was living on the same ranch at the time of the battle, called it a "wanton massacre" of Indians rather than a battle.

One night in 1919, I stopped overnight at the Pourier (Horsehead) ranch, as I wanted to talk to the old gentleman. He was well into his eighties, but still spry and supple. Aside from his failing eyesight, he seemed to still be a powerful man. Not an ounce of surplus flesh—all bone and muscle. One could easily visualize him through the eyes of General Crook when he wrote of the brave Frenchman: "Big Bat seldom used a gun or knife when fighting at close quarters. He was a powerful man with his two fists."

As I looked at Big Bat and noted his cat-like movements as he gestured more like an Indian than like a white man, I could picture him as he is described in *Life and Adventures of Frank Grouard.* I thought of the account of Big Bat and Grouard attending a dance at Red Cloud Agency near what is now Crawford, Nebraska.

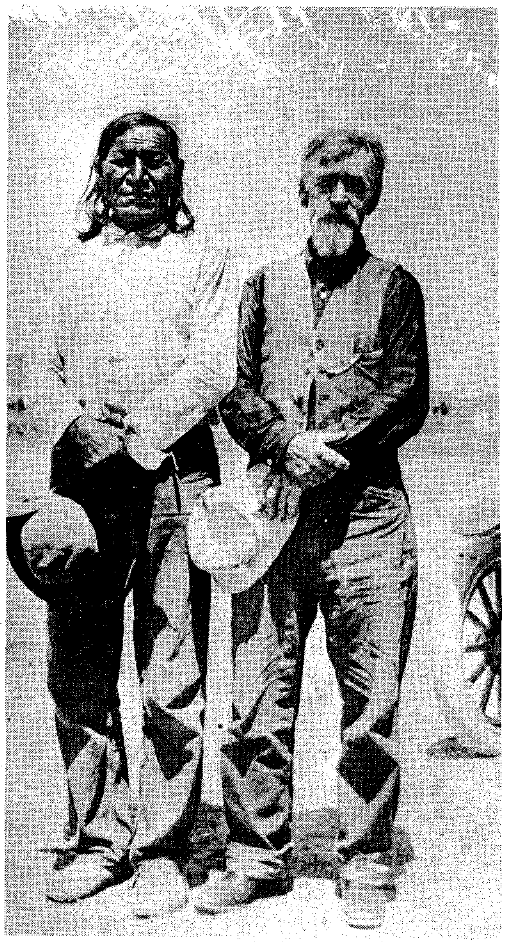
The two scouted for Indians together and were pals. A group of four men of mixed blood had conspired to "get" Grouard, but Big Bat got wise to the plot and told Grouard that he, Big Bat, would stand guard while Grouard danced.

One of the conspirators made a move toward Grouard, and Big Bat, alert and quick as a panther, sent him spinning into a corner of the room with a powerful right to the jaw. Right away, three others attacked Big Bat, and despite their numbers, Big Bat used crushing rights and lefts to pile all four of his attackers in a heap in one corner of the room.

I asked Big Bat to tell more about it, but he was inclined to dismiss it as of minor consequence. He was more interested in heaping glory upon his friend, Frank Grouard.

I said, "Mr. Pourier, who in your opinion really was the greatest of all Indian scouts?"

Now, without too much egotism, Big Bat might have claimed at least a fifty-fifty status for himself. But he answered, "There never was as great an Injun scout as Frank Grouard, him."


Big Bat Pourier (right) with "Oglala Charley" Picket Pin, Sioux who served as army scout with Big Bat during Indian Wars of the seventies.

Big Bat's son Pete sat there listening. He said, "Pappy, tell Mr. Lincoln about the ride on the pinto horse."

And Big Bat swung into action on his favorite topic—horses:

I was with a company of soldiers and we was camped about seventy-five miles from Fort Fetterman. That was in what we know now as Wyoming. It was snowin' and gettin' colder. Somebody had to go with a dispatch to Fetterman. And the sun was gettin' low. I sez, I'll go if I can have that pinto horse to ride. Me, I didn't know the trail very well, but I knowed that horse did.

So with the captain's dispatch in my pocket, I got on and started. I had on felt boots and a heavy coat . . . had my gun buckled on around the outside of the coat.

That horse seemed to know he was goin' home to Fetterman and so I just let him have his head, and we hit into a high lope. He would lope a while, then slow down to a trot or maybe a walk. He was a smart horse, him. He seemed to know we was in for a long, hard trip. And it was gettin' colder and colder all the time. My, oh, but it was cold.

We kept movin', but there wasn't any stars to be seen. It had turned into a regular blizzard with the air so full of fine snow you couldn't hardly see in front of you, and the sky above was dark with low clouds. I don't think I ever knowed such a cold night. I had an army blanket

(Continued on page 45)

Any rodeo contestant would have sold his soul for the honor of being known as the man who rode Midnight, the world's

BUCKINGEST BRONC

By FORBES PARKHILL

THE first time Jim McNab tried to break the big black colt to the saddle, he allowed as he picked himself up from the corral dust as how he reckoned that daggoned midnight horse must have been sired by a sidewinder and foaled by a hellcat.

Maybe Jim's judgment was warped by the bronc's terrific bucking, which he swore jarred his backbone clean up through the crown of his ten-gallon hat, but later some five hundred of the world's top rodeo riders, having failed to tame the midnight gelding, admitted that Jim hadn't been talking through his Stetson.

The bronc that spilled Jim so explosively was Midnight, who, most of the top-hand rodeo riders will tell you, was the buckingest horse that ever lived. And this takes in enough territory to include old Steamboat, in his day regarded as the toughest old hellion that ever disguised himself in horsehide.

His owners say the man never lived who could ride Midnight under standard rodeo rules, though two bronc peelers laid claim to the honor of sticking with him for more than the required ten seconds, during his declining years.

Sired by a Morgan and with a strain of thoroughbred and a dash of Percheron, Midnight was foaled on McNab's Cottonwood ranch near McLeod, Alberta, Canada, in 1915. When he got his growth he stood fifteen hands and one finger high and weighed 1,250 pounds. He was big and rough and tough and ungainly, with the strength of a thirty-ton tank, the voltage of a powerhouse, the stubbornness of a stalled truck and the disposition of a buzz saw.

Sometimes you hear the yarn that Midnight was broken to the saddle as easily as any fuzztail fresh off the range and was being ridden by a country schoolmarm until the day he was frightened by a newspaper fluttering in the wind, ungallantly dumped the lady into a cactus patch, and turned outlaw.

Midnight usually threw'em clean.
Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce Photo

BUT Jim McNab is an authority for the story that Midnight was brought in from the open range with the other fuzzies that were old enough to break, and unloaded his then owner three times out of three, which no horse had ever done before.

Jim was plenty sore, physically and figuratively, so he called on Joe Stump, his top-hand Indian horse wrangler. Joe climbed aboard the black and did something he'd never done before—described a parabola. When he came to, he drew his time and hied himself back to the reservation mumbling "Ugh," which means "Nuts to the white man's civilization."

All Jim McNab's close neighbors within a radius of sixty miles heard about the big black, and one by one dropped in to take a whirl at him and one by one rode back home with pillows in their saddles.

Finally the word got around to Twenty-one Johnson. Twenty-one modestly admitted he could tame the worst outlaw bronc with a silver dollar in each stirrup without losing a dime. He used a saddle with an eighteen-inch swell that virtually padlocked him to his horse.

So the story goes, Twenty-one showed up at Jim's place with fifty bucks that said he could ride the midnight bronc into the ground. At the third jump, Midnight snapped him back so violently that his head thumped the horse's caboose and blood began to leak from his nose and ears. Twenty-one lost his stirrups and his riding rope, and when they brought him 'round with a bucket of water, found he'd lost his rep and his fifty bucks.

Up to 1925 Midnight retained his amateur status, bucking just for the fun of it. He went pro when Jim sold him down river to Pete Welsh for a reported price of $100, and became one of Pete's string of wild horses supplied chiefly to Canadian rodeos.

MIDNIGHT first electrified the cash customers at the Edmonton Jubilee. He was in fast company, but made the toughest rodeo buckaroos look like thirty cents in Canadian dimes. The boys at the Edmonton show were tops, but none of 'em warmed Midnight's saddle long enough to spit twice.

Meanwhile Verne Elliott, Colorado cowboy who had won fame by topping the notorious old Steamboat at the Ogden, Utah, rodeo in 1910, had retired from active competition upon incurring an injury calculated to cramp his style slightly—a broken back.

He formed a partnership with Ed McCarty, winner of the Cheyenne Frontier Days bucking championship a few years later. They supplied bucking horses, riders, Brahma steers, trick ropers and most of the pep and vinegar for rodeos in the United States and Canada.

Guy Weadick, impresario of the Calgary Stampede, wrote them about the unridable black gelding. Verne, just finishing the Pendleton show, corraled four of the greatest riders in the business under the grandstand. All were heading for the Winnipeg show, and Verne said that if Midnight was good enough to toss any one of 'em, he'd sure 'nough buy him. These boys were Hugh Strickland, Paddy Ryan, Bob Askins and Bert Civits. Any one of 'em could stick to a bolt of lightning, but later they reported to Verne that Midnight was as hard to handle as a skillet of rattlesnakes.

Out West Photo, Cheyenne, Wyo.

Midnight, buckingest bronc that ever lived, piles another rider.

So Verne bought him for $250 and took him to the Elliott & McCarty winter quarters at Fort Worth. When the black outlaw appeared at the Fort Worth rodeo in 1928 the newspapers were blazoning his fame.

An old-time cattleman who had struck oil on his outfit offered to plank down cash money on a cowpuncher who, he said, would make Midnight look as if he'd learned his bucking on a merry-go-round.

His needling got under Verne's hide, so he took him up. When the rodeo riders learned of the bet they insisted on adding to Verne's $2,000 until a pot of $5,000 had been raised. The ranchman produced a huge, powerful horse wrangler from the Fort Worth stockyards.

Modern rodeo rules require a rider to stay in the saddle ten seconds, using only one rein, which can't be knotted or wrapped about the wrist. He must ride with one hand in the air and can't change hands on the rein. He must come out of the chute raking his horse on the shoulders with his spurs and then must shift and rake his flanks.

He's disqualified if thrown; if he "pulls leather," which means grabbing the saddle horn; or if he "blows" a stirrup. Application of resin to the seat of the pants is barred.

VERNE waived all rules except the time limit and "pulling leather." The wrangler was simply to "ride 'im slick, cowboy style."

"He leaned down and got a short holt on the rein," says Verne, "figuring to hold Midnight's head close by main strength, which is okay if you can get away with it. When the chute opened, Midnight won the bet for us just by wrinkling his backbone and sticking out his nose, jerking the rider out of the saddle by the rein. The wrangler didn't get as far as you could throw a post hole."

Still unconvinced, the ranchman wanted to bet he could pick another rider who could tame Midnight. Verne and Ed bet $3,000 of the rodeo pool money that he couldn't. This time the rider was Pete Knight, rodeo veteran and one of the greatest riders that ever lived. The ranchman offered Pete $2,500 if he stuck with Midnight.

The bronc shot out of the chute with the fury of a wildcat with a knot in its tail and launched into a series of terrific walking-beam, or straight-ahead, pitches. At the first buck, Pete showed daylight between his pants and the saddle. At the second he blew a stirrup. With the third jump, Midnight stuck his bill in the ground and kicked a hole through the clouds. The cantleboard of the saddle spanked Pete out in the air for a swan dive ending in a four-point landing.

Subsequently Pete drew Midnight out of the hat in more rodeos than any other rider and came nearest to mastering him. He tackled him at Fort Worth, Columbus, Vancouver, Pendleton and Cheyenne. At Cheyenne, the year Pete won the championship, the management, as an added attraction, offered him $100 if he could ride Midnight. This time he stuck with him for seven and one-half seconds before he was tossed.

Pete died with his boots on at Hayward, California, where he was trampled to death by an outlaw horse.

Earl Thode of Belvedere, S. D., world champion bronco buster in 1927, 1931 and 1932, drew Midnight at four rodeos and probably kissed away more prize money than any other contestant because of the big, black bronc.

After leaving Midnight with a cool saddle in three rodeos, Eddie Woods ciphered it out this way:

"When he pitches, the front of the saddle skyrockets up against your chin, and you wake up in the ambulance."

WHEN Midnight's enormous front hoofs jarred the ground, it was enough to jolt a man's inwards loose from his ribs. After being projectiled at Toronto and laid low at the National Western at Denver, Paddy Ryan reported, "When he unhinges, he all but breaks a man apart."

Verne Elliott says Midnight customarily throwed 'em clear; seldom let 'em leak off the side of the saddle like some of these penny ante buckers.

(Continued on page 51)

Some rivals just don't appreciate a helpful attitude. Joe Gillespie mixed cunning and skill to become a winner in

Grandfather's 1,000 Mile Race

By ORA NIEGEL

I SAT on the corral fence in the shade of the big livery stable, watching Grandfather Joe Gillespie tussle with a colt he was breaking to lead. Though Grandfather had long since quit breaking horses to ride, he still liked to gentle and break them to lead himself. Before long he had the colt following him about the corral with only a slight pressure on the lead rope. Then he led the bay gelding into the barn and returned to sit on the barn doorsill, wiping his brow with a large red bandanna.

I moved quickly to sit beside him and beg for a story, the story of Grandfather's great 1,000 mile race from Chadron, Nebraska, to Chicago, Illinois. The vigorous old man helped himself to a generous chew of Star before beginning his story:

THAT was a great race, by golly, a great race! The greatest test of horseflesh and human endurance of all time. Proved a lot about horses, and people too. Proved that if you take care of your horses, they'll take care of you. Proved that some men will do most anything for fame and money.

Anna didn't want me to go; said a man with a family should stay home instead of galivantin' off on a 1,000 mile race. But seems like when I heard of it I couldn't keep from going. Everybody said my size was against me. Hundred and eighty-five pounds is a lot of tallow for a horse to carry so far. I didn't care so much for the $1,000 purse as for the fun of taking the trip and seeing Chicago and Buffalo Bill. Of course, that prize Colt .44 looked pretty good to me.

We were each allowed two horses, and I decided on Billy Mac and Billy Shafer. Billy Mac was a fine horse, but Billy Shafer was the best horse I ever owned, by golly. It was really Billy Shafer that won the race for me. Pensioned him off when he got old, I did, and when he died I buried him out there under the willows by that little creek.

The starting time was five o'clock in the morning on June 13, 1893. Everybody in the country was in Chadron to see us off. We galloped off in a bunch when they shot the signal gun. The dust was so thick we couldn't see the town behind us, so we slowed down to a shack that's easy on a horse and man and covers a lot of miles.

We took it easy that first day. Nobody tried to get ahead, just let our horses harden up and get ourselves used to the saddle a bit. We all knew that the first day didn't count for much anyhow. A route was all mapped off for us, with eleven towns where we had to stop and have our horses inspected.

We carried bacon and biscuits enough to last for three days. That would see us through the badlands. After that we could get provisions along the road. We camped in the edge of the badlands that first night by a small water hole. Sure was a pretty night, by golly, with the stars so close and bright, and just us nine men and our horses out there on the edge of nowhere.

I thought maybe someone would try to ride out ahead the next day, but no sirree, that bunch of guys rode so close you'd think they was scared. And pretty soon I found out they were. Toward evenin' Doc Middleton let the cat out of the bag when he asked me how much longer it'd take to get to the next water hole. There weren't none of them fellers knew how to get through the badlands. They were letting me lead 'em.

Course, if you didn't know the way you might ride for several days without finding water, and when you found it, it might be poison. Then you might come out where you went in. I tell you them badlands is bad. Knew them like a book, myself, though.

Just for fun I took those guys the long way around, by golly, so it was after dark when we made camp by a spring in a little box canyon.

THE next day I spent a lot of time thinking. Why should I lead this bunch of Hoosiers through here just so they could maybe beat me later on. Let 'em find their own way, I sez.

That night I took my blanket over to one side away from the others. John Berry wanted to know why I was getting so exclusive.

"You mangy coyotes snore too loud. I'm gonna get fur enough away so I can't hear you," I told him.

I sleep sound, so I put a burr in the back of my shirt, so when I went to sleep and rolled over on my back I'd wake up. Well, the burr worked all right. I almost cussed when I rolled on it, but I remembered in time. I got up, rolled my blanket and started to saddle up. Then I looked over toward the campfire. Rattlesnake Pete was a sittin' there as calm as you please watchin' me.

"Just as well go back to bed, Joe," he said. "We're not agoin' to let you go anywhere without us."

The others were sittin' up and cussin' me out, so I unrolled my blanket and went back to bed. I knew when I was outnumbered. It was then I decided to beat the skunks if I possibly could, by golly.

After we got out of the badlands, it was every fellow for himself and the devil take the hindmost. Davy Douglas was the first to drop out. He got saddle sick and decided the game wasn't worth the candle. At that time I was riding neck and neck with Doc Middleton and Rattlesnake Pete, with the others close behind.

I camped in the open with my horses nights, but the other guys generally stayed at small hotels along the road. Bets were high and I wasn't much favored to win because of my weight, so I wasn't giving anybody a chance to get at my horses.

One of Doc Middleton's horses sprained a tendon and he had to leave it at Sioux City. He was in the lead, but with only one horse, Rattlesnake Pete and I soon passed him. Two days later John Berry caught up with us and took the lead. I couldn't see that, so I tied one horse to the saddle horn of the other, and held on to the rear horse's tail and ran behind. I beat John into Fort Dodge that way.

It was cloudy when I made camp the first night out of Fort Dodge and a cold wind was blowing. I was so cold I could hardly sleep all night, so I got out as soon as I could see and started on. I wrapped my blanket around me Indian style, because I hadn't brought a coat in order to save weight. Pretty soon it started to rain. By golly, that was the coldest rain I ever saw in June. It rained pitchforks and bull yearlings until the ground was knee-deep in mud; sticky, gooey mud that almost pulled the horses' shoes off. Somewhere in that sea of mud John Berry got ahead of me again, but Pete was still close behind. That's the way it was when we got to Iowa Falls. John was starving himself to keep down his weight and I threw away the blanket as soon as the sun came out. I rolled up in the saddle blanket at night.

I heard that Pete had to leave one of his horses and was drinking heavy and pouring whiskey down his horse's neck to give him strength. They both went down the drain.

WHEN I got to Manchester I decided to rest my horses for a spell and have their shoes looked at. All that mud had been powerful hard on their feet. Billy Mac was showing signs of giving out, and I had made up my mind to take both horses all the way, win or lose. I had to favor him considerable from then on and Billy Shafer took the brunt of the work. While I was waiting for my horses I wandered around town a bit to see what excitement I could dig up, and by jiggers I found a circus, a little one horse, one ring affair. They had a mule that couldn't be rode, so I rode him, by golly. Nearly broke their hearts.

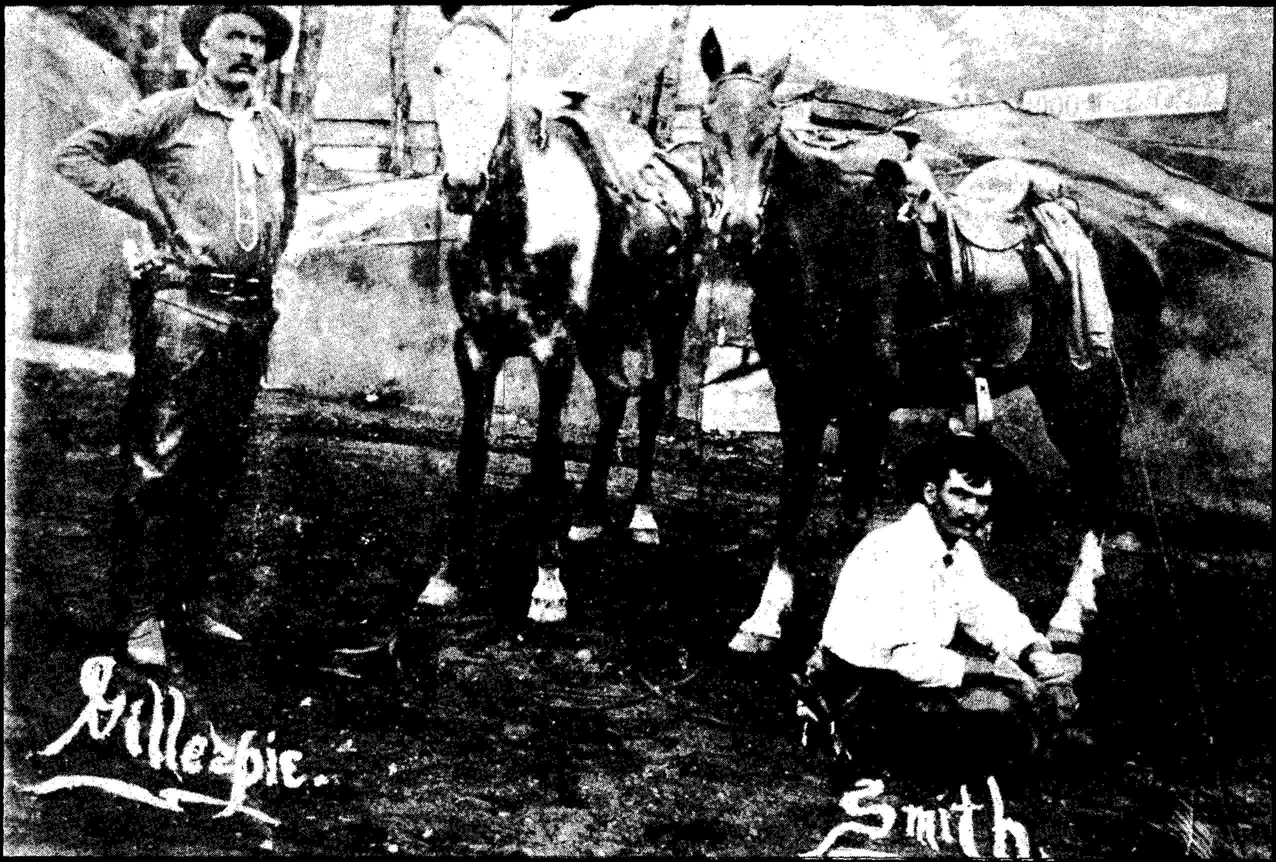
The Humane Society in De Kalb, Illinois, had ruled that all riders would have to have a carriage escort from there to Chicago to see that we didn't override our horses for the last seventy miles.

Berry was only an hour ahead of Smith and I, but he had ridden one horse nearly to death and left it before he got to De Kalb, so old Poison was in fine shape. Berry took his escort and went on with Poison.

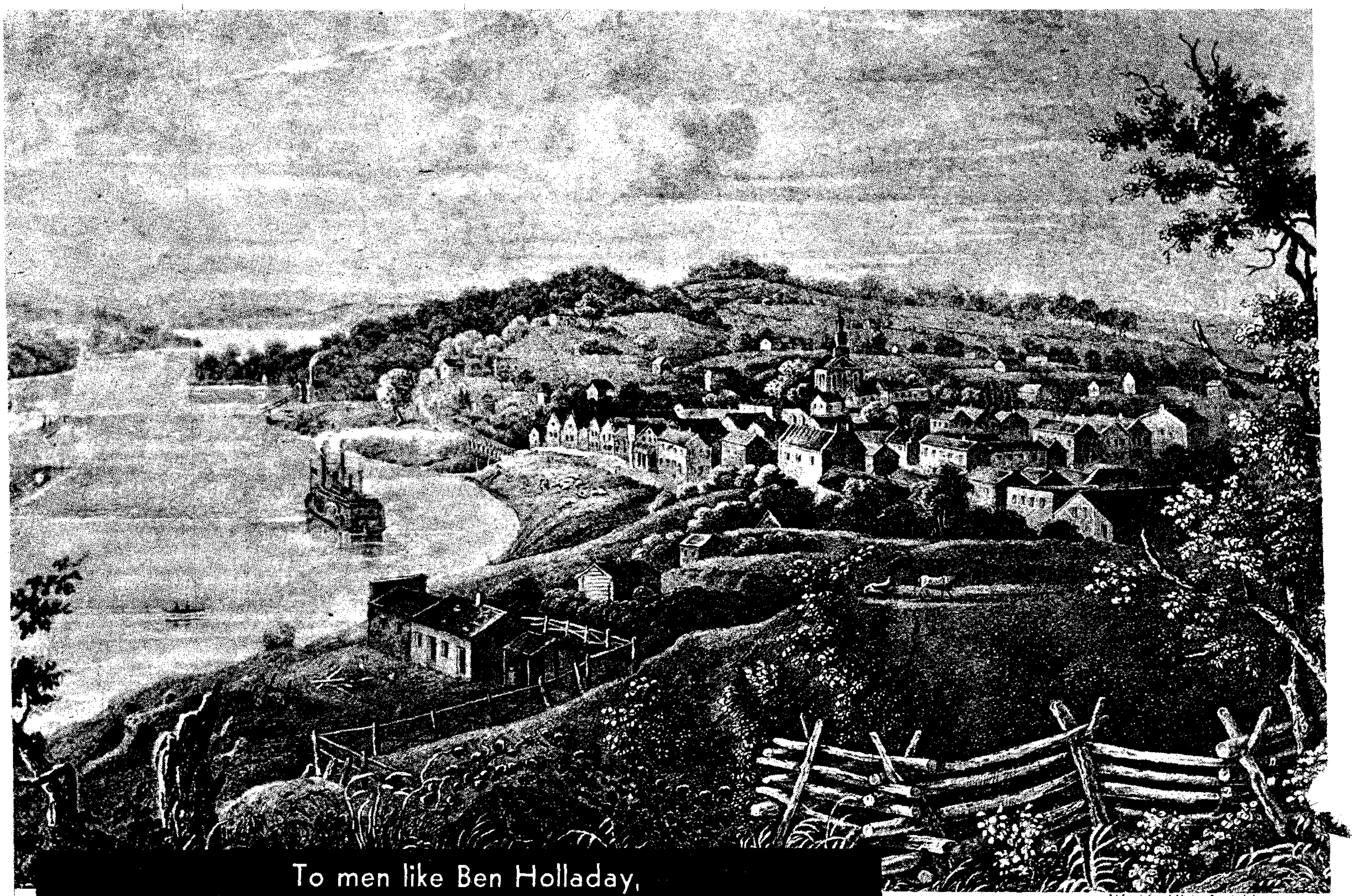
Smith and I figured we didn't need an escort, so we went to every livery stable in town and rented all the carriages, while our horses were being inspected. Then there were no carriages available to escort us so we started out on the last lap alone.

Smith soon fell behind, and when I rode into Chicago close on Berry's heels, I found that he had already been pronounced the winner. There were a lot of people thought I was the rightful winner, though, because he finished with only one horse, and I brought both of mine through.

The upshot of it was that they decided to split the purse between the four of us that did finish, and Colt's gave me the .44 because they figured I was the rightful winner. Buffalo Bill Cody shook my hand and said he was sure pleased to see a man in such fine shape at the end of such a ride. We had covered 1,040 miles in a fraction less than fourteen days of the hardest riding I ever did or hope to do.



End of the race at 1,000 Mile Tree! Joe Gillespie is shown here (standing by his horse, Billy Shafer) with Smith, a challenger.



Weston Historical Museum

Weston, Missouri, in 1850.

To men like Ben Holladay,
the word "impossible" was a challenge.
His fabulous cross-country run to save the Overland Express
was an "impossible" feat.

FASTEST STAGE RUN IN HISTORY

By ELLIS LUCIA

From THE SAGA OF BEN HOLLADAY
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As the ferry from San Francisco nosed its way to the Oakland pier, the first man to leap ashore was Ben Holladay, boss and owner of the Overland Stage Company.

"Are we ready?" he inquired of a man who ran up to greet him.

"We are, sir. Every station along the line is prepared and waiting."

"Good! Let's get rolling."

Holladay, then forty-six and head of what at the time was the world's greatest transportation system, had just left a San Francisco hospital against his doctor's orders in order to personally participate in an event that was to make history. His transcontinental mail contract with the government was coming up for renewal and there were reports that Congress might not act favorably. The lifeblood of his far-flung Overland Stage Line depended upon its renewal. Attorneys for the Butterfield Stage Lines across the Southwest, which had been interrupted in its operations by the Civil War, and Wells, Fargo, were seeking Congressional support.

Lobbyists in Washington were alleging that Holladay's line, the Overland, was slow, inefficient and undependable. They said he was running a buckboard stage line, that his equipment was falling apart and that schedules could not be met. The purpose of the project underway that late summer morning of 1865 was to disprove these claims and show that the Overland was still the top stage company of the nation. Speed and efficiency were what counted and Ben Holladay had announced that the run would cut six or seven days off the present schedule, come rain, heat or Indians!

The Overland's best stages and horses had been put in readiness for the historic run from San Francisco to Atchison, Kansas, the most hazardous stretch of blistering deserts and mountains to be found anywhere in the world. There were hostile Indians out there waiting for anything that moved on wheels or on two or four legs, and there were desert storms, suffocating heat, washed-out roads, mountains to climb and many other obstacles to be overcome. It made no difference to the government that Red Cloud's warriors had the West practically bottled up—the mail had to go through.

The run was to be made in relays, the first stage leaving Oakland to go as far as Placerville, then a change of teams and drivers and it or another in its place would go on. But for Holladay it was to be one long and continuous trip, changing from stage to stage as the run continued. He was not one to leave such a job up to someone else. The mail was going through and he would be there to see that it did.

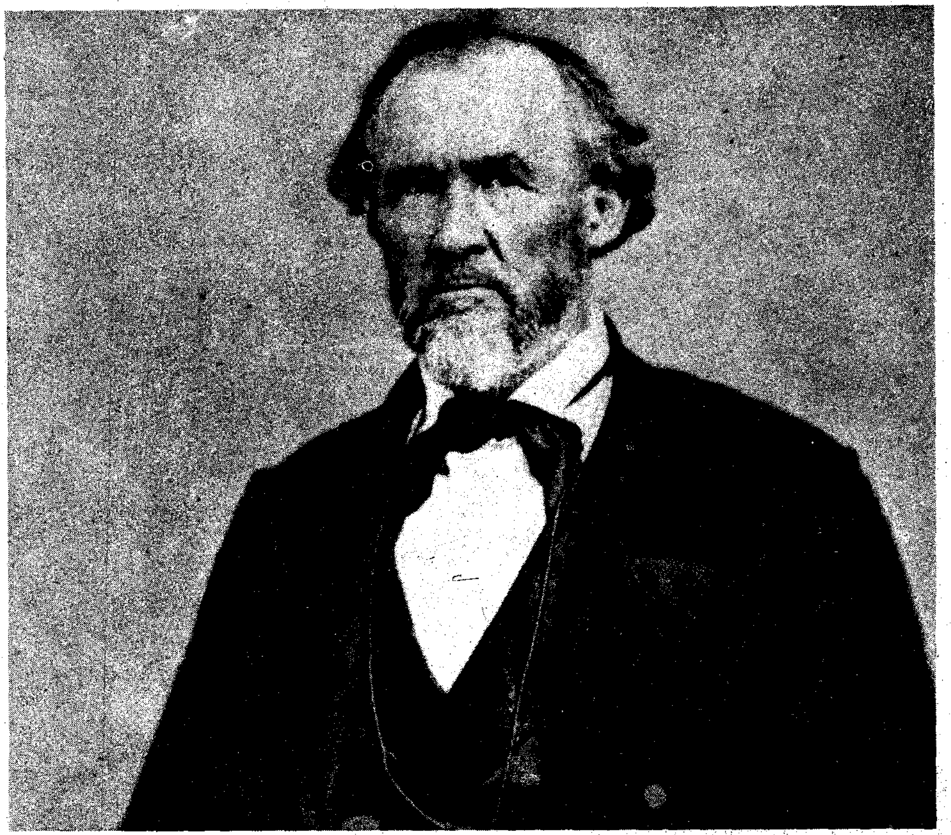
He was dressed for the part—finely woven wool pants, a flannel shirt open at the neck, polished boots and a wide-brimmed black hat that curled up on the right side. A big watch chain of gold nuggets was anchored to a buttonhole of the wool shirt, the other end disappearing into a pocket. Fastened to a jewel-studded belt around his waist was a worn holster containing a heavy Colt revolver.

His face was covered by a black spade beard and mustache and his hair needed cutting. It was as curly as it was black.

At the crack of the driver's whip the four fine horses lunged forward and the greatest transcontinental stagecoach crossing in history was under way.

The run to Folsom and Placerville up the Sacramento Valley was without incident except that persons along the way familiar with the schedule noticed that the stage was early that day.

Quickly the teams were changed at Placerville while Holladay chewed away at a fistful of meat and a hunk of bread. Then he mounted to the high seat beside the driver and waved them on.



Ben Holladay

Up through the narrow gorges and hairpin turns of the High Sierras sped the big Concord, Holladay constantly demanding more speed.

"Faster, dammit, faster!" He clung tightly to the weaving seat, his eyes always on the road ahead, for this was a race to save the great transportation empire he had built. If he didn't win, it could fall apart. He needed to retain that mail contract and a fast run with plenty of publicity would do it. With the war over, the newspapers across the country were hungry for headlines and if an Overland stage were to lop six or seven days off the regular mail schedule, there would be many headlines. Congress seemed to depend on headlines to indicate the way the winds were blowing.

Night and day the Concord sped eastward, Holladay sleeping an hour or two at a stretch, curled up in the passenger compartment. There were no passengers, for none had been taken aboard. Holladay figured he would have enough to worry about without taking on the additional responsibility of making his passengers comfortable.

As the stage rocked along over rock-strewn washes and sometimes over trails that little resembled a road, Holladay had time to meditate over the events of his life that had put him where he was.

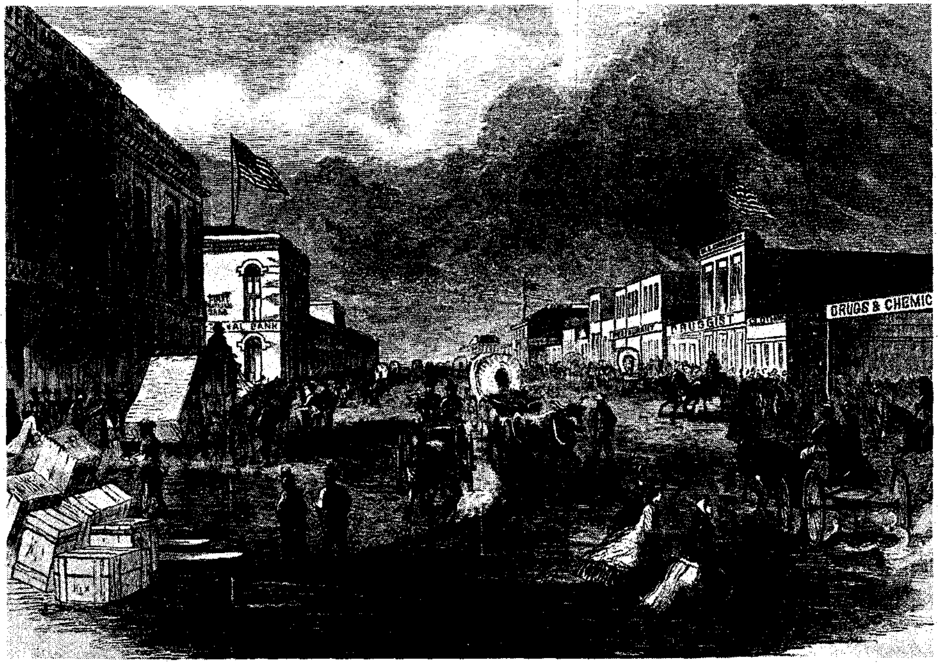
SHOULDERING a roll of clothing one summer day when he was seventeen, he had left his home in Kentucky and struck out for St. Louis, where he met some of the great trappers and traders, Bill Sublette among them. Ben signed on for a freighting trip to Santa Fe. Comanches, heat, dust, thirst or even illness did not discourage young Ben. He liked it, though the return trip took forty days.

He made a trip back home to see his family, then returned to St. Louis where he boarded a steamer up the Missouri to "see what he could see," as he later put it.

What he saw he liked, and that was Weston, a rip-roaring new town on the banks of the river, across from Fort Leavenworth. Here, something seemed to be telling him, he would find his fortune.

Trouble between the Missourians and the Mormons flared and Ben joined the state militia. Governor Boggs' order to exterminate the Mormons sickened the

The Overland Coach Office in Denver, Colorado, as depicted in HARPER'S WEEKLY of January, 1886.
Kansas State Historical Society



youth; his sympathy went over to them and he did them countless services, eventually resigning from the militia.

Freighting was his calling, Ben decided, and he quickly raised what money he could and organized a freight line, but he needed help. He sent for his brothers, Joseph, Jesse, Andrew, James and David, who came at once. Later his parents and two sisters joined them.

Young Ben made history that first summer his brothers were there by pounding out on an anvil a wide steel tire, four inches wider than an ordinary wagon wheel, to which the tire was fitted. A freight wagon was fully equipped with the wide tires and it drew so much attention there was hardly room to work around it.

"With that much weight on a wheel," someone observed sagely, "the horses won't be able to pull even an ordinary freight load."

The queer-looking wagons became the laughing stock of Weston, but when Ben made a trial run to Santa Fe with a load of freight, he clipped six days off the regular schedule and people began to sit up and take notice. The wide tires held the weight of the load on top of the ground where it met less resistance from sand and mud and it rolled easier.

While this stage of his life was developing, Ben's brother David discovered near Weston a spring of sparkling, clear limestone water that he thought would enable him to distill an excellent bourbon whiskey. So he started a distillery, its phenomenal success to outlast even the great Overland Mail & Express Company that Ben was to launch from Weston at a later date. It became the McCormick Distillery which today sprawls over many acres and makes the world-famous McCormick whisky and other popular brands of liquor. Ben's other brothers branched out into various endeavors but Ben stuck with freighting, making money on every venture.

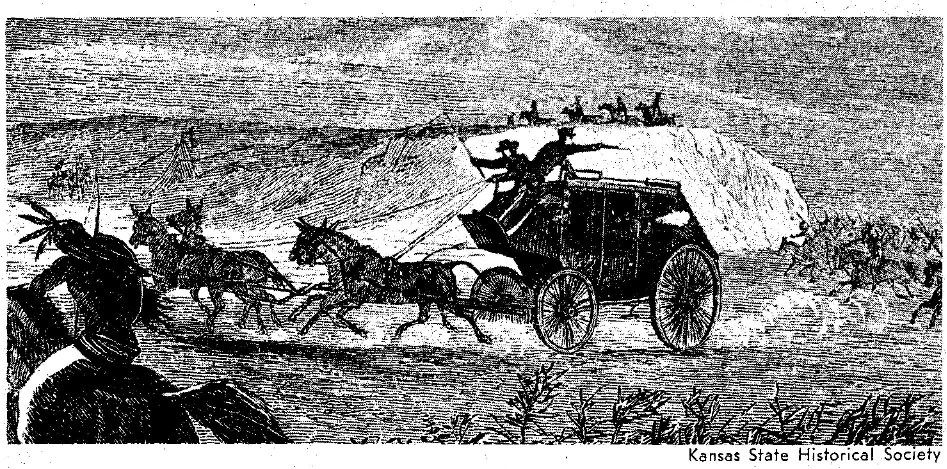
Meanwhile Russell, Majors & Waddell were expanding their freight and stage lines, but they constantly needed money. Ben Holladay had it and they borrowed from him time and again. Eventually they borrowed too much and Ben Holladay closed them out, gaining possession of hundreds of Conestoga freight wagons, Concord stages, horses and equipment.

It was out of this that the great Overland Mail & Express Company emerged, which was extolled by Mark Twain in *Innocents Abroad*. Holladay now owned some 6,000 horses and 200 Concords to maintain a mail and passenger service over more than 3,000 miles of trails and roads through the roughest country imaginable.

If the run from San Francisco to Kansas were made successfully, he would have enough ammunition to blast the Butterfield and Wells, Fargo lobbyists out of the halls of Congress and maintain supremacy in the field of stagecoaching.

Through Mormon Station and the arid stretches of Nevada the big Concord rolled, Ben Holladay sleeping fitfully. He grabbed something to eat wherever he could and his harangue of the drivers went on endlessly. "Faster, faster, dammit!"

Most of the time he was on the box, beside the driver, and frequently he took the lines himself. Beyond Salt Lake they rocked down through Echo Canyon and into Fort Bridger.


Kansas State Historical Society

Early stage coach trips were often perilous. T. R. Davis depicted this ride in an 1887 HARPER'S MONTHLY.

THE run had begun to be noticed. More and more the newspapers mentioned it, reporting its progress. Telegrams from various points kept the editors posted.

Leaving Fort Bridger, they were in Indian country and Ben Holladay scarcely left the box now, sitting with a carbine across his knees. An Indian raid here could ruin all his plans.

As they rocketed on they came to one relay station in black ruins. Nothing was left of it and they had to go on without changing teams. Three attendants, their heads scalped, lay dead in a heap of ashes.

It was a sickening sight, but Holladay was accustomed to it. Several of his way stations had been sacked that summer by Indian raids and he had replaced them, sending out new crews.

They found the next station wrecked but not burned. Two attendants lay dead, their bodies full of arrows.

Holladay cursed the Indians and vowed that he would destroy the whole tribe for having interfered with his well-laid plans. But he kept going, most of the time without sleep. One horse dropped in its tracks and was released from the harness. Finally another was out—dead from a heart attack.

With but two horses left, the stage pushed on relentlessly.

Springs and leather complained as they sped across the Great Divide. Down the grade a distance they lost a wheel and the stage turned over on its side.

"Get it fixed!" Holladay bellowed.

But it was beyond repair. Luckily they had a spare.

With fresh horses and a new Concord, they were finally at Green River, having cut the regular run by many hours. As yet Holladay was not saying by what margin the schedule had been cut; he was leaving it up to the reporters along the way to guess at it, hoping that in the end it would be much greater than expected.

Beyond Green River the thunder rolled and lightning stabbed into the night, making travel impossible. By moonlight it was sensible to keep rolling, but in almost total darkness they had to lay over.

Rain came down in sheets, flooding the draws and arroyos and rendering some crossings impossible. They had to wait, and during these delays Holladay strode up and down fretfully, cursing his luck. He was well ahead of schedule, but if the elements turned on him he might lose every advantage he had gained.

Finally they were off again—Salt Wells, Sulphur Springs, Medicine Bow, Big Laramie. Near Big Laramie a fierce duststorm struck them and slowed the pace to a mere walk. All Holladay could do was shake his fist at the sky and bemoan his luck.

Finally they were at Virginia Dale where the notorious Jack Slade, who had been in charge of that station, had gone amuck and turned outlaw. At last they rolled into Denver.

Holladay liked the food in Denver, but on this occasion all he ate was a ham sandwich and a few pickles. There wasn't time for anything else. He hadn't changed clothes nor had a bath since leaving Oakland, and he didn't intend to bother with such niceties. He didn't smell any worse than some of the drivers he sat by on the box!

In Denver the newspaper reporters flocked around Holladay and his stage, demanding to know just how many hours ahead of schedule he was, but he refused to divulge this information. When a reporter spoke in terms of hours he laughed. "Days, not hours," he said, and this whetted the scribe's imagination. The Rocky Mountain *News* reported him five days ahead of schedule.

But there was little time for interviews. The stage laid over but fifteen minutes while the horses were changed and off it went across Colorado to Julesburg and onto the plains of Nebraska.

At one point a band of Sioux broke out of a wash and came charging after the stage. Holladay grabbed a rifle and lay on top, banging away at Indians galloping along after the stage in a cloud of dust which concealed them from view. The strong horses drawing the stage were faster than the Indian ponies and soon the Indians were lagging far behind, outclassed by the Overland's finest. The Indians turned tail and made off.

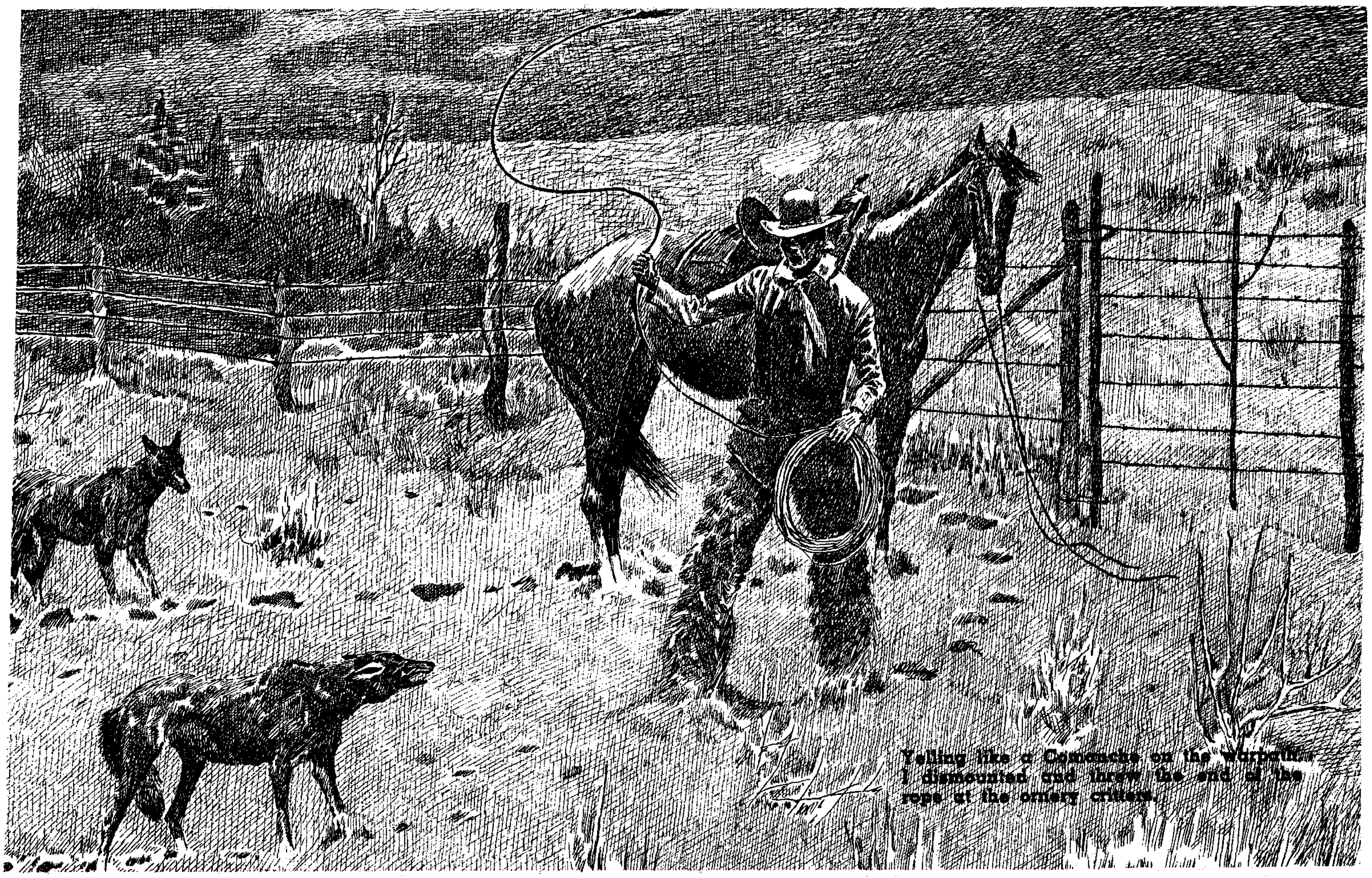
At last Atchison, Kansas, was in view.

"Lay on the whip and come in at a dead run," Holladay instructed the driver. "Make it look good." And it did. This stage was drawn by six black beauties that came in lathered and puffing, while the cheers of a large gathering greeted them.

As the Concord drew up in front of the Overland office, Holladay fired a rifle into the air. He leaped down, pulled out his big gold watch and announced in a voice everyone could hear, "Twelve days and two hours!"

It was five days better than any other

(Continued on page 53)



Yelling like a Comanche on the warpath, I dismounted and threw the end of the rope at the ornery critter.

I Spent Christmas On A Horse

BY FAY SMITH

Illustrated by B. D. Titsworth

It was a tragic message the rider brought to the lonely ranch house in the blizzard-swept Laramie Mountains. But *somebody* had to carry it . . . . .

THE wolves on my trail were getting closer. My horse was tired, his fastest gait was a slow walk. I was facing the blizzard; it was bitterly cold. Coming up the canyon, it was tough going for my pony—about a foot of snow and all uphill.

It was Christmas Day in the year 1911. I was riding at that time with the Diamond Ranch cowboys, home ranch near Bosler, Wyoming. That morning a telegram had arrived at the tiny telegraph office on the Union Pacific Railroad, addressed to Tom Moore.

Tom was a homesteader who had taken up a claim at Sybille Springs—pronounced Sabeel—fifteen miles east over in the Laramie Mountains. The message stated that Tom's mother in Iowa was dead. The telegraph operator got someone to go to our ranch and ask for a rider to deliver the telegram. There were no telephones in that country then; no automobiles, either.

I volunteered, for the message just had to be delivered. This was hard to do, for the bunkhouse was warm and cheerful. We had a big wood pile and nobody was too lazy to feed the fire. Our only work on Christmas Day was to fork out hay for the stock. No cows to milk; we used canned milk—on a ranch with hundreds of cows! We riders wouldn't even fix a fence; there was a "chore-boy" to do that. We had a real high-class outfit, including a saddle-maker to repair saddles and harness and a blacksmith to keep our horses shod.

The ranch manager had invited us to dinner in the big house, and we knew he'd pour a drink in honor of the occasion. There was a wash tub of hot water on the floor and a pot heating up on the stove, and we punchers were busy bathing, shaving, and trying to find clean shirts. Then the message arrived, and a sober pall dropped over us.

I took my top horse to make the ride. He was a bronc, but—as he had a bit of hot blood—he was long-legged and handy in deep snow. I dressed warm; long woolen underwear, heavy mackinaw pants, flannel shirt, saddle-length fur-lined coat, angora fur chaps. My tailor-made boots were slick leather-lined—that double leather added warmth. I also had a pair of high-heeled overshoes which fitted the cowboy boots. (The low, flat heels some men wear now had not been invented. We wore two-inch underslung heels, which would keep a rider's foot from going through the stirrup if a horse fell.)

I owned a good six-shooter, a .32-20 caliber Bisley model single-action Colt with a 7½ inch barrel. In those days we wore guns not so much for protection against men as for use on animals. A man could get into trouble with his rope, when alone, if he tied onto a critter that was too big and his horse was jerked down. Also, there were bears, wolves, coyotes, and rattlesnakes. But I didn't figure to have any trouble this trip, so I left the gun in the bunkhouse—that much less weight for the horse to carry. Right there I made a bad boner.

I had to first cross the Laramie Plains for ten miles upgrade to the pass at the western edge of the mountains. There I would enter the canyon that led down

(Continued on page 54)

The rugged breed of men who follow the big-time rodeo trail will never forget

STEAMBOAT—KING OF THE BUCKERS!

BY SAM HOWE

From Western Horseman

THE LAST EVENT IN THE BRONC BUSTIN' CONTEST IS STEAMBOAT WITH GUY HOLT UP."

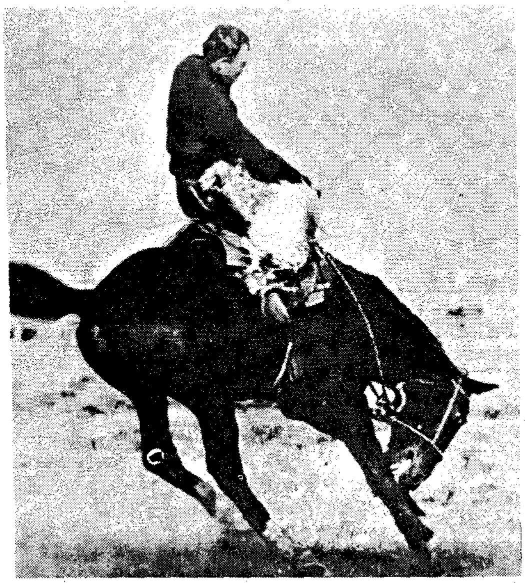
This was it! The grandstand crowd at Cheyenne's Frontier Days tensed. Somewhere a Texas cowboy whooped. A drunken soldier from nearby Fort Warren answered with a cheer, and the crowd laughed its approval.

But it didn't ease the tension. All eyes stayed riveted on the arena gate. Through it a mounted pickup man led 1100 pounds of jet black horseflesh.

Steamboat! King of the Buckers!

Head erect, ears twisting, tail flicking, Steamboat trotted to a cleared space directly in front of the grandstand. He halted, faced the crowd and whinnied. It sounded more like a reedy wheeze. The spectators answered with a whoop and a holler.

They knew about that wheeze. As a colt, Steamboat had broken his nose, and it healed crooked. From then on he hissed and when the going got rough, his squeals took on the shriek of a steamboat whistle.



Steamboat with Guy Holt up, at Cheyenne, 1903. Photo by B. C. Buffum.

It only added to his glamour . . . for make no mistake about it, Steamboat had glamour. And did he ever love it!

Now he strutted back and forth in front of the grandstand: head up, tail aswish, like an actor making an entrance. That was Steamboat . . . an actor and an artist, unlike any other bucker.

He stood motionless while a pickup man slid a bucking rein and gunny sack blindfold over his head. He still looked every inch the show horse, an equine portrait of innocence. Who would guess what a mean cuss he could be!

EARED down, then, he waited. Guy Holt, a famous bronc buster, tossed up his red and blue saddle blanket.

The minute it touched his hide, Steamboat's knee-joints began to bend. Four hoofs planted solid to the ground, he started to squat.

Holt threw up his bronc saddle and screwed it on tight, planting one knee against the gelding's side and yanking up hard on the single cinch.

That done, he checked his own gear: bandanna, Stetson, spurs, and bucking corset. All were cinched tighter.

Steamboat's belly scraped dirt. Releasing him, the pickup man stood back. Holt swung aboard. Off came the blindfold.

A split second pause. Everyone held their breath.

And Steamboat exploded!

In one shocking eruption, he sprang off the ground, joints stiff, tail arched, neck straight out in front of him.

Zigzagging across the field, he jet propelled himself to the center of the arena. Pickup men, cowboy handlers, peelers, scattered to the fences.

The big gelding swapped both ends between jumps. Each time he came down on four steel ramrod legs, sending Holt up off the saddle. The peeler's arm clawed the air. A wide tunnel of daylight showed under the seat of his jeans.

But still Holt hung on, clinging with his knees and one hand on the horn.

Steamboat arched his back like a spitting cat. It left his rider no choice but to grab for leather. With barely seconds between the battering bucks, Holt clutched the horn in a death-like grip. His insides twisted, throbbed, writhed. His nose began to bleed.

The crowd leapt to its feet, screaming for both horse and rider:

"Ride 'im, cowboy! Ride 'im! *Ride 'im!*"

"Come on, Steamboat! Crack 'im off! *Crack 'im off!*"

Through their frenzied yells they could hear Steamboat's high shrill whistle. With each jolt, it soared sharper and higher till it rang jagged and shrill above the tumult.

Now, at the far end of the arena, he swapped ends and started back on a crooked return that swung the rider wildly. One zig followed another zag with a sunfish in between. On the last switch, when Steamboat's head and forefeet headed west while the rest of him lit out north, Guy Holt spilled down out of the saddle and hit dirt. Blacked out, he sprawled there.

With any other bronc it would have spelled injury or death, for the average outlaw is out to kill. But not Steamboat. Once rid of his rider, he took off toward the grandstand and never quit bucking till he raised the hated saddle. That done, he rested on his laurels and accepted the applause of the crowd.

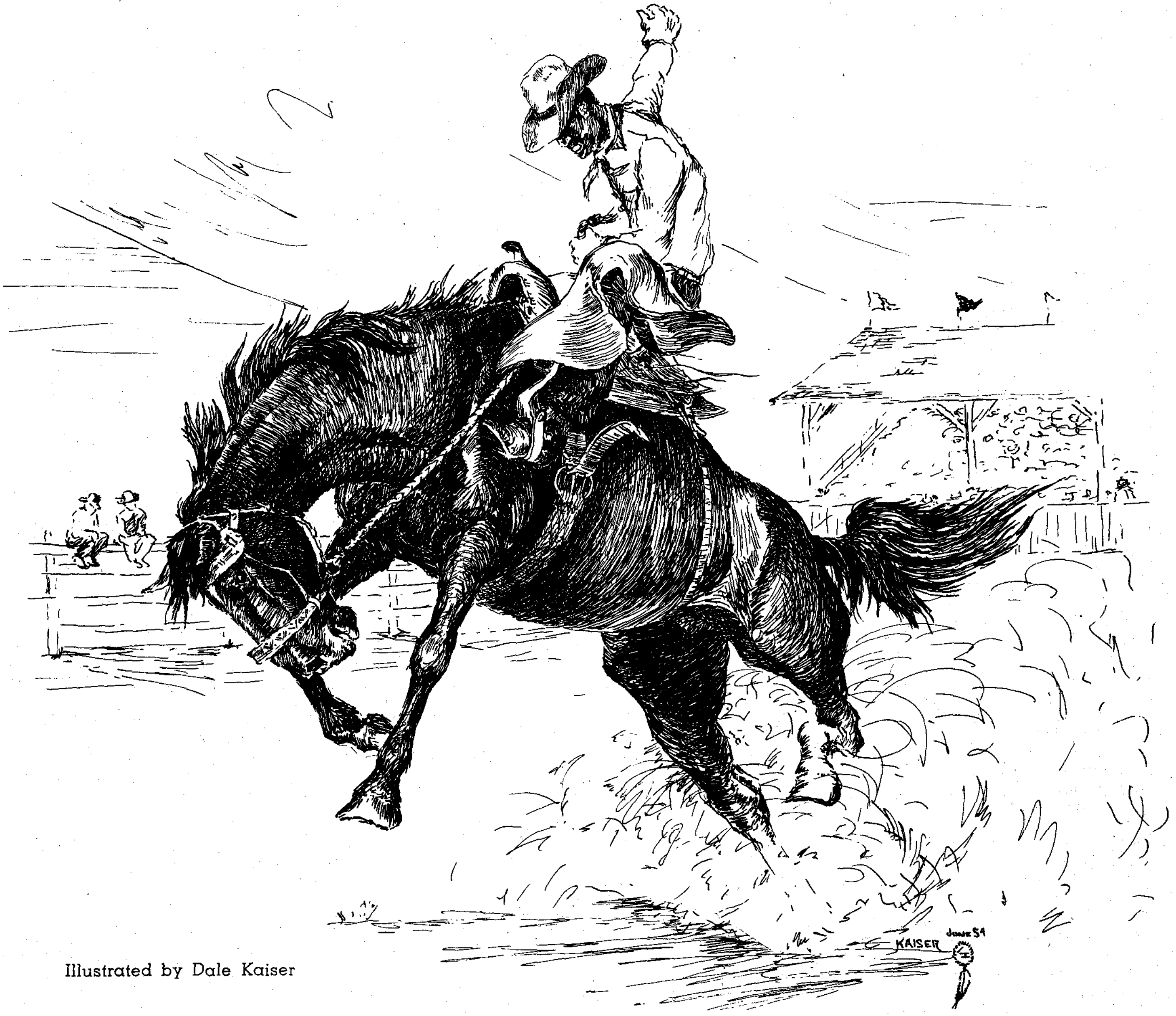
A CHANGE in rodeo rules makes it hard to compare bronc riding of today with that of 1900. No ten second rule cut rides short then. The peeler stayed up until he held down his bronc or bit dust. On good broncs, most riders cracked off or gave up.

Steamboat never backed down. The first attempt to ride him on his home ranch, the Two Bar in Wyoming, resulted in a fight. Apparently he decided early in life that he'd never be a cutting horse. Since there's no place on a well-ordered ranch for a bronc, he had to be sold. Steamboat went into the rodeo circuit. And for fifteen years this high-roller refused to quit.

A cowboy ballad of the period tells of this:

I was out in Wyoming, way back in '03,
Where there's hosses aplenty and every one's free;
A bronc peeler's heaven, this country, I'm told,
So I high-tails it out there to get me some gold.

With my hoss and my saddle, I lands in Cheyenne,



Illustrated by Dale Kaiser

And start looking around for a bucker to fan;
It sure don't take long to find out what's the score,
For the rodeo's on and there's twisters galore.

I've a "rep" to uphold so I signs up to ride,
Whatever I draw, a square-head or pie-eyed;
From the very first day I never gets throwed
Till I boarded old Steamboat and felt him explode.

He pulled up his head and I knew he unwound,
I could see the whole grandstand go spinning around,
His legs went out stiff and he humps up his back,
I tastes blood from my nose and could hear my ribs crack.

While he's cat-backing east, I'm a-flying out west,
So I grabs for leather and hit the horn with my chest,
I'm blind as a bat and my back is near broke,
When old Steamboat lets go with his very last stroke.

I was loose in the saddle and almost unbolt,
When he sets down his feet in a pile-driver jolt;
I cussed him one round but I've got to admit,
Old Steamboat's the bronc who just wouldn't quit.

STEAMBOAT made his debut at the Mountain and Plain Festival in Denver in 1901. Even though he had a lot to learn, he put on a good show. The next year he landed a berth at Cheyenne's Frontier Days where two champions got on his back, each confident of winning. Steamboat thought otherwise.

Erupting into a crow-hopping, pile-driving course, he swung his hips like a hula dancer. One peeler grabbed the horn, hooked his spurs in the cinch and hunched his head down between his shoulders.

In pinwheeling circles, Steamboat whirled to the right, then straightened out in a sudden about-face.

It was a gut-twisting pitch—so hard it threw his rider clear under Steamboat's belly.

From then on men burned with desire to ride him. Some traveled all the way from Canada only to lose their shirts.

Frank Stone drew Steamboat in 1904. As soon as he stepped up, Stone had to grab the rein and the horn.

Somehow, in the process, he lost control of his head. It snapped back and forth while Steamboat careened over the arena. At each side jerk, it twisted to right and to left.

Stone blacked out, staying up only by virtue of a death-like grip on the horn. When Steamboat finally threw him, Stone couldn't talk above a whisper for a month.

Finally in 1908, Dick Standley rode Steamboat to a standstill in Cheyenne. It rained very hard that morning and the buster knew his business. He forced Steamboat into fetlock deep mud. No horse can buck in mud or water.

A Colorado newspaper screamed "Foul Play." The spirit which imbued Steamboat would have built cities, opened new land, cleared forests, and watered deserts, according to the editorial. "But Steamboat was only a horse."

Yet what a horse!

After Standley's ride, others managed to stay up, but only after a hard fight. Jack Maring was one of these.

His was a wind-milling, jackknifing ride. Maring jammed his stomach on the saddle horn every time Steamboat's

(Continued on page 53)

My Horse Didn't Like Me

(Continued from page 19)

away with it. Another time, seeing a big rock and a tree close together, he darted between them, hoping to scrape me off. But again I fooled him—I was on my knees on top of the saddle when he got there. There wasn't room for him to get through and he got stuck. He started to buck and I couldn't get off onto either the tree or the rock. I was in a bad spot on top of that saddle, but I weathered it out. He pitched so much in that tight squeeze that my carbine scabbard, slung under my leg, had a hole chewed clear through the thick leather where it had grazed against the rock. I looked at it again just now and with a touch of nostalgia thought of all the riding I used to do, the many near misses . . .

ONE TIME it wasn't a near miss—Cooncan broke my foot and tried to kill me. I had made a good cow horse out of him, rope horse, cutting horse. He knew cattle and liked to work them. Another rider and I were moving a bunch of cows and calves into the ranch in the late fall for winter feeding. There was little snow on the ground, but it was cold. Crossing a small, almost dry creek, a cow broke back. Cooncan took after her without me telling him to. The cow turned back to the herd; I knew Cooncan would turn, too. That horse turned so short sometimes my foot would almost drag ground. I tightened my seat, prepared. But I wasn't prepared for the ice which was under the grass, ice which neither Cooncan nor I could see. His foot shot out from under him and he landed on my foot. I didn't have a chance to raise it. He bounced right back on his feet, but I was hurt and made no attempt to ride him back and quit the saddle instead. That was an error. I found myself hung, left foot stuck in the stirrup (I was wearing two-inch underslung heels, and the left one didn't pull through). The stirrup was twisted and my foot sort of telescoped. Cooncan dragged me, kicking at my head; I rolled away to the left to get away from those deadly heels. That's the only way to get a stuck foot out of a stirrup—roll away from the horse and the foot will turn over and come free. Mine did.

The rider with me was out of sight over a little rise when he saw Cooncan in with the cattle. He came looking for me, leading Cooncan. We both knew I couldn't ride Cooncan back, wild rascal that he was, so I was lifted up on my pal's gentle horse and he rode Cooncan. We quit the cattle and headed for the ranch a mile or two away. My foot was so swollen we couldn't get the boot off. It had to be cut—broke my heart to see a good pair of tailor-made boots go down the drain.

The nearest doctor was a day's ride away, no automobile, no telephone. Those good people at the ranch set my foot, bandaged it tightly and it healed perfectly. In those days we were our own doctors and furnished our own law. In a few days I was riding again—on a gentle horse—and carrying a crutch. Cooncan didn't mean to fall, I know—horses don't like to fall any more than we do—but after he got me down he took advantage with those heels.

ONE TIME after an all-day ride, Alice, my wife, and I rode into the corral. She went to the house and I closed the front gate. But the gate to the horse pasture was open. I had just loosened the cinch but had not unhooked it (I used a tackaberry buckle) when Cooncan broke away out through the gate into the horse pasture bucking and running. I thought he would go down in the pasture but instead he went around the barn and through a barbed-wire fence. I found my rifle torn off the saddle under the fence. (We carried rifles all the time for there were stock-killing wolves on our ranges.) I watched Cooncan pitching down the road and saw the saddle turn under his belly and pound the top of his forelegs as he ran and bucked. There was blood on the ground under the fence, so I knew he was badly cut. I ran back, mounted my wife's horse and took out after him. Half-a-mile from the pasture I found my saddle, which he'd apparently shed over his hips. I stopped and got my rope. I chased him a mile or more before I could rope him. He was a mess all over—a piece of meat half as big as a football hanging from one shoulder, one eye cut out and hanging, all four legs badly cut.

I led him slowly home and went to work. The nearest vet was twenty-five miles away, in Laramie, so I had to do the job myself. I got a big needle and some thread from Alice, put that piece of flesh back in his shoulder and sewed it in place. I put his eye back and sewed it in place. We had some strong carbolic acid salve which I rubbed over his cuts. It was summer and the flies were plentiful; this was a good healing disinfectant and would keep them away.

The author on Cooncan.

He recovered completely. The tops of his forelegs were badly pounded by the saddle, but that worked out and he soon had four good legs again. I did make one mistake however; when I put his eye back I sewed the eyelid open. He could never again close that eye, but he could see with it fine. Looked funny when he would wink, like he was flirting with you.

Funny thing, while I was doctoring him he would stand in the corral without being tied and I could do anything with him. He even let me squat on my heels right behind his hind legs and never offered to kick me. He knew I was helping him, and appreciated it. But when he got his health back he was just as mean as ever and again I couldn't touch him back of the cinch.

ONE TIME when Alice and I were riding on the open range in the Pole Mountain country between Cheyenne and Laramie we ran across a lone lamb. It was fall and the lamb was big and fat. It was Fred Warren's range; I supposed he had moved a band of sheep through there and the big lamb had gotten separated and left behind. I didn't know where Warren's men had gone, and I didn't want to leave the lamb there for wolves and bobcats to get. So I said to Alice, "I'm going to rope him and take him home." I figured the next time I saw Fred I would tell him about it and make it right even though the lamb wasn't branded.

Ever try to rope a sheep? Don't. I've heard of cowboys roping coyotes, which I doubt, never having seen it done. A friend of mine, Art McKechnie, roped a bull elk once, halter-broke him and led him home. I saw the elk in Art's corral. Art used a sixty-foot rope and swung an enormous loop—the McKechnie loop, we called it—but he got the job done. I used a forty-foot rope.

So I tried to rope this lamb. It didn't run away, Just dodged through sagebrush about a foot high. All my casts weren't good, but even good ones he would duck out of before I could pull them snug. I was making my loops smaller and smaller, which took more accurate throwing, and Cooncan was helping me out all he could. Finally, with a loop not over two feet big, I made a perfect cast. As the loop hit the end of the rope the lamb was in it; I popped the rope as I would a whip and I had him. I hog-tied him and went to lead him over the fork of my wife's saddle. But her gentle mare wouldn't let me do it; so as a last resort I had to try Cooncan. He never moved and we got our mutton home.

MY FRIENDS wondered why I made Cooncan my top horse. Several reasons: he was a challenge (and I was young); no matter how long or hard the ride he always came home with his head up; he never got tired; he was handsome to look at and was one of the best cowhorses I ever rode. Most horses are gun-shy, their ears so sensitive the blast of a gun hurts them. But I have laid across Cooncan's saddle and used him for a rest on a long rifle shot and he never moved. Another good thing about Cooncan—a man hates to lend or let another man ride his top horse. No man ever asked to borrow Cooncan.

When I enlisted in World War I, I shipped all of my cattle and asked a neighbor to take care of my horses for the use of them. Horses don't sell for anything on the open market; besides, I didn't want to sell them. I could always buy cattle—and I figured on coming back—but good horses are something else. And, anyway, I loved Cooncan.

When I returned I found that two men who tried to ride Cooncan were promptly bucked off and he wasn't ridden again until I got back.

Sometimes I think Cooncan was just playing a game with me and didn't really hate me. I was always kind to him, except when I was forced to fight him. When I returned from the service, I could tell. I caught him without roping him—he knew me and sort of snuggled up and didn't offer to buck after two years without being ridden.

In my weaker moments I like to think he actually liked me—in a sadistic sort of way . . .

“Greatest Pinto Ever Born, Him!”

(Continued from page 33)

on the saddle in front of me and I pulled it up and over my head. The reins were hooked over the saddle horn and I just let the horse have his head.

On and on we went. That horse would lope, and with every jump he would snort from his nose. Finally, he stopped in a sheltered spot where the wind didn't hit, and went into a walk. I could tell we was in the shelter of a high bluff. I don't know where it was and me, I didn't care. Here was a place to get off my horse and fix my clothing and blanket better. My fingers was so cold I couldn't hardly use 'em. But I did get my pistol belt unbuckled. I had mittens on, but still my fingers was numb.

When I got my clothing fixed better, I tried to buckle the gun back on. But my fingers just wouldn't work, they was so cold. I knowed if I stood there tryin', I'd freeze. The gun and belt dropped to the ground. Then I saw there was a cave or crack under the bluff, so I just kicked that gun and belt under the rock. Didn't want an Injun to find it. As far as I know, that there gun is still where I kicked it. I couldn't find the place again, me.

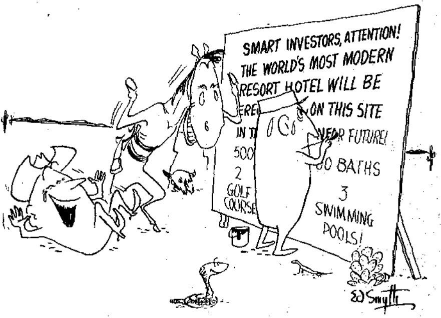
I got on the horse, and we hit the trail again. I pulled the blanket over my head, and just didn't try to see where I was goin', but I knowed that horse would take me to Fetterman if I let him have his head. I pulled the blanket up clear over my head, and got my hands wrapped in the blanket, then held my hands close to my body. And so on and on we went through that cold night.

Wherever it was level goin', that pinto kept up the same lope as when we started. If he come to a draw or ravine, he would ease down into it and out at a walk, then hit the lope again. Didn't seem to be any tire in that horse . . . he was goin' home to Fetterman, him. And that's the way it was 'til it must of been close to morning.

Then I heard that pinto hit a bridge. Calump, calump, calump he went; never stoppin' for any bridge. But I knowed it was the pole bridge across the creek at Fetterman.

The soldiers come out of the log buildings and pulled me off and got me in by the fire. First thing they done was to give me a tin cup full of whiskey. One of the men took the horse to the log stable. The room was warm and nice, and in a short time I felt as good as ever, me. I give the dispatch to the post commander, and laid down on an army bunk and didn't know any more 'til the next morning. I went to the barn to see the horse, and he seemed to be just as good as me. He was chompin' hay from the manger like nothing had happened.

I think of that horse every day of my life. And I'll say now as I have more'n a hundred times: There never was a horse born and never will be another one equal to that pinto, him.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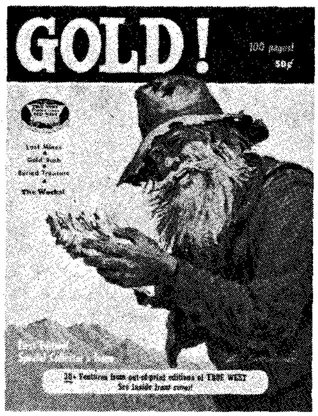
—Joseph Conrad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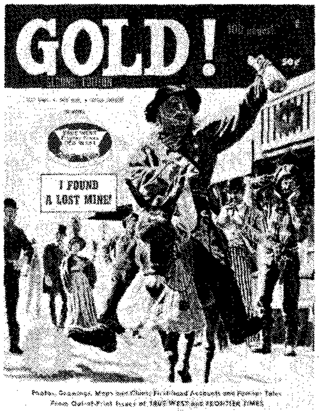
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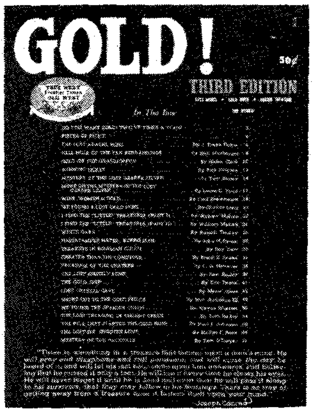
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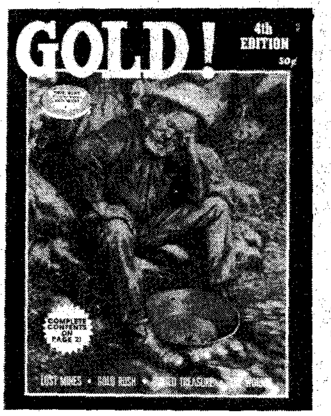
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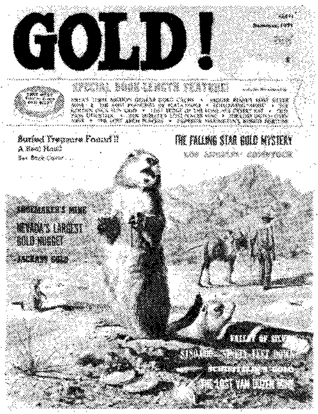
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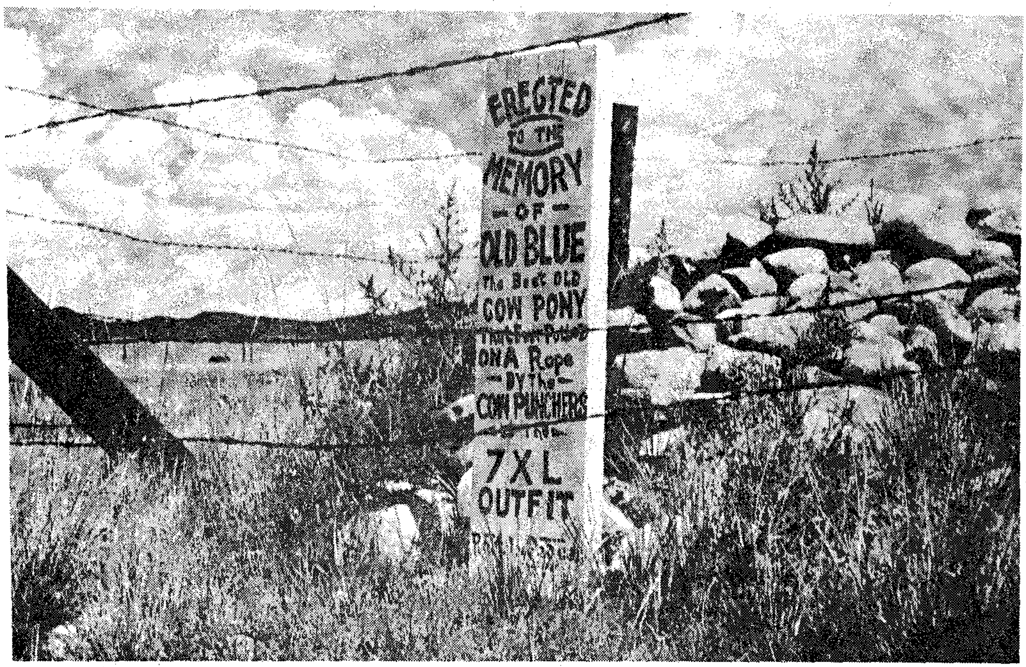


OLD BLUE

BY WILLIAM HARNIN

A few yards north of the Wyoming-Colorado state line on U. S. Highway 85 a mound of stones lies half-hidden in the bunch grass and tumbleweeds. Over the mound a wooden slab bears an inscription beginning:

ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF OLD BLUE . . .

Here, in the western range country that keeps his memory alive, numberless cowpunchers have built a touching monument to this stouthearted ranch pony. Each of the stones in the mound bears a name scratched with a knife or a horseshoe nail: Don, Dick, Charley, Ernest, placed lovingly upon the growing pile by working cowhands and rodeo riders who won't forget Old Blue.

Old Blue was a rancher's kind of horse. Originally a mustang on the wind-scrubbed Wyoming plains, he was trapped and broken by punchers on the 7XL Ranch near Cheyenne, Wyoming, more than forty years ago. His dam was a ranch Percheron, his sire a mustang, wild as the Wyoming wind.

After being broken to the saddle, Old Blue—named for his blue roan color—became one of a string of horses assigned to Gil Prentiss, youthful son of the ranch manager. The boy-owner and his horse made several sheep drives together, one of which lasted eight months. The drive began in northern New Mexico, led across the length of Colorado, and ultimately into Wyoming.

The 7XL spread, at one time the largest operating stock outfit in Wyoming, kept a remuda of 3,000 horses to run herd on 25,000 cattle and 125,000 sheep. The owner of the 7XL, Francis E. Warren, a U. S. Senator from Wyoming, was reputed to be "the largest sheep owner since Abraham."

In later years, Old Blue was one of a large string of horses used to trail a herd of cattle across the open prairies to the Sioux Reservation near Rosebud, South Dakota. At one time during the drive the herd stampeded. Old Blue and his rider, young Prentiss, narrowly escaped death by outrunning the charging animals. When his life on the open range was ended by advancing age, Old Blue finally became a decoy horse and lured the remnants of the wild mustang herds that still roamed the vast open spaces of the Warren spread. Another of his chores was dragging refuse carts or buckboards, or being trotted in the ranch yard as a gentle mount for the owner's grandchildren.

When Old Blue died some years ago, cattlemen from distant ranches rode to the 7XL and buried him. The funeral service was preached by John Bullene, a 7XL cowhand, out of a full heart. Now, in annual tribute, the weathered wooden slab is freshly painted every fall at roundup time, to insure that Old Blue will never rest in a forgotten grave.

The epitaph reads with simple rangeland eloquence: "ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF OLD BLUE. The Best Old Cow Pony That Ever Pulled On A Rope. By the Cowpunchers of the 7XL Outfit. Rest in Peace and Good Will."

TH' DANGEST RIDE

By C. E. CHUPP

UNCLE JIM MASSEY has been a West Texan ever since there has been a West Texas—or at least for the last sixty-nine years of it. The other day we were sitting out on his back porch swappin' yarns. It came Uncle Jim's turn, and he looked over at me and says—but, here, let me put it in his own words.

"Back yonder in the winter of 1909 I had me a trap line down Toyah Crick, up in th' Davis Mountains. Y'see, I'd got boogered-up wranglin' cows over 'round whar Odessa is now. 'Course it was there then, but not so much of it. But, like I say, while I was mendin' up I'd started trappin'. I was doin' purty good, too. It was cold enough for the pelts to brang top prices and game was thick as lakes in Minnesotar.

"One uncommon hot day in December, I was just reachin' th' fur end of m' line when I run into Bill Somebody. I don't recollect the last name. Bill was trappin' too, an' our lines met in this patickler spot. Cutthroat competition was unknowed in them days—they was enough game fer both of us—an' so we was real good pardners. An' like allus, we set down under an ellum with thick enough mistletoe to shade us an' lied to each other fer a spell.

"After we'd run down one another's catch an' cussed the weather, we just set there for a spell while it got hotter an' hotter.

" 'I be'leeve I'd give m' eye-teeth for a bottle o' cold beer,' Bill said, as he wiped the sweat outta his eyes. 'You cain't never tell from one day to another what this dang weather's a-gonna do.'

" 'Tell ye what, Bill', I sez, 'I got some bottles o' beer down at camp that I'll split with ye. It's been in th' river fer a week an' I figger its ice cold. If ye'll skin the varmints, I'll go down and git it.'

"Bill was plum agreeable t' this, an' he'd already started skinnin' when I forked m' cayuse and lit out at a high lope fer camp. It was a two mile ride, but afore I knowed it I was a grabbin' them cold bottles outta th' crick and loadin' my saddle bags. They was only eight bottles, so I was soon back on th' hurricane deck and litin' a shuck back upstream.

"Th' sun was gittin' hotter n' hotter, an' th' trail was roughern' a cob, but I was mite near in sight o' Bill when I heered what sounded like a gunshot right ahind me. I wasn't hit but it spooked my last year's bronc an' he started swappin' ends purty seriously. It kinda took me by surprise but I stuck 'im and had 'im slowed to a crowhop without hearin' any breakin' bottles. I was feelin' plumb proud when I heered four more shots an' we was off agin with m' crow-bait windmillin' an' buckin' antigodlin toward th' brush. It was so danged hot though that he soon lost 'is inspiration an' we started on toward Bill. I wasn't skeered no more, 'cause I figgered Bill had been joshin' around tryin' to pull a joke on me. But just as I saw Bill I heered two more shots frum ahind and my gut-twister broke into a feeble frog walk fer a ways. He was s' tuckered now though, that it warn' very interestin'. Then I saw Bill rollin' around on the ground an' might nigh bustin' a gallus laffin'. It made me about half mad and when I reined in an' anchored I ast, 'What in hell's s' funny, didn't ye hear somebody shootin' at me?'

"'Jim, ye made a purty ride', he sez, an' then he busted out laffin' agin.

"'Dammit, Bill', I sez, 'here ye are alaffin' while somebody's a shootin' at me. Helluva friend you are.' I was mad an' I guess he seen it, 'cause he slowed down to a grin.

"'Jim, ye dam'd idit, go look in yore saddle bags.' I looked an' then we both set down an' had a big laugh—without beer. Th' corks was gone outta the bottles an' th' beer was all gone, but that crow-bait o' mine was shore lathered. I reckon that was th' dangest ride I ever took, an' I'll tell ye for shore that it ain't safe to carry cold beer in a bouncin' saddle bag on a hot day."

THE HORSE THAT SURVIVED THE CUSTER MASSACRE

By NONO MINOR

THERE WAS but one survivor of the Custer Massacre on the Little Big Horn—a horse named Comanche.

In the spring of 1868 the U.S. Government purchased several horses in St. Louis for the Seventh Cavalry, among them a sorrel that caught the eye of Captain Myles Keogh, who requisitioned it for his own.

During a skirmish with Comanches on the Cimarron River, at Beaver Fork, the animal was wounded. Treatment restored it to duty and it was named Comanche by Keogh, who liked it better than any horse he had ever ridden.

On June 26, 1876, Keogh was with General Custer when his troops rode into the trap set for him by the Sioux on the Little Big Horn.

The day after the battle General Terry's men were burying the dead when they came across Comanche. Lt. H. I. Nowland recognized the animal at once and gave orders that it was to be saved at all costs. It had been shot seven times and was almost dead from loss of blood.

Comanche, still able to walk, was taken to the steamer *Far West,* anchored at the junction of the Big and Little Horn Rivers, and transported down stream to Bismarck, North Dakota, where he was given every attention possible. Army veterinarians from as far away as Kansas were brought in to care for him. Recovery from seven bullet wounds was slow, but eventually Comanche was back on his feet and receiving a generous allowance of oats daily.

At Fort Abraham Lincoln, across the river from Bismarck, there was much rivalry for the honor of owning Comanche. Many fine offers were made, but the fort commander, Colonel Sturgis, decreed the famous horse would never be sold. The cavalry would maintain the animal and he would be saddled, bridled and draped in mourning on certain ceremonial occasions, and led by a mounted trooper of Company I, of which his late owner had been the commander at the time of the massacre.

When the Seventh Cavalry received its orders to move to Fort Riley, Kansas, Comanche went along.

He was given every care for several years, until old age overtook him. He died peacefully, far from any battlefield, during the winter of 1892.

Professor Dyche of the University of Kansas skinned the old veteran and using the bones as a frame mounted it. It was presented by the Seventh Cavalry to the University of Kansas. The carcass later was sent to the World's Fair at Chicago in 1893 where it was viewed by millions of Fair visitors.

Time eventually took its toll and the hide of Comanche deteriorated to the point where it had to be destroyed.

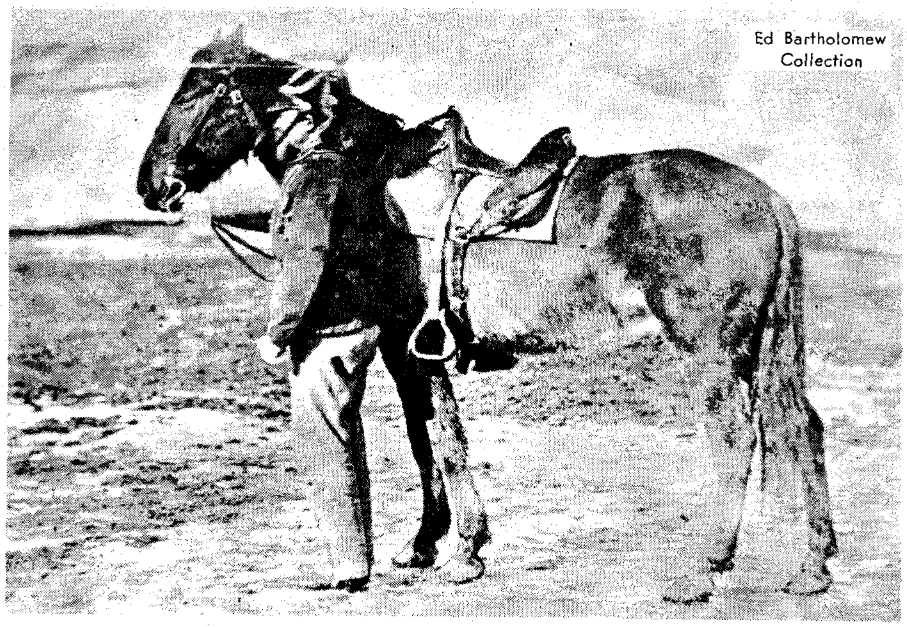
But Comanche still lives—in the hearts and minds of horse lovers everywhere.

HOSS SENSE AND KIDS

By GEORGE PHILLIPS

AS the country changes, so also do the people. We used to strive to give our kids a college education, and still do. We wanted them to become lawyers, doctors, statesmen, etc. Nothing was too good for our kids, no goal they couldn't reach—or so we fondly told ourselves.

"Comanche," sole survivor of the Battle of the Little Big Horn.


Ed Bartholomew Collection

Right about then we'd run into some knothead young'un who couldn't learn a damn thing! Such kids were left at home to become farmers and cowboys. Such vocations, we calculated, required no education and very little sense. Neither parents nor teachers made a scientific study of the kids to see what *they* wanted to do. (Nowadays it's all changed; cattle people and farmers are being scientifically educated in their chosen profession.)

But how about the knothead kids we left at home to become cow servants and plow jockeys? Well, once in a while, one of those dumb appearing, chuckle-headed lads would bust loose in the fields of finance, statesmanship, literature or some other worthy profession and astonish the old folks and everybody else. They had good old common cow sense and hoss sense, hardily developed in meeting and conquering the every day problems of life. We, their parents, just didn't pay enough attention to them to realize that they were smart in certain lines, so they had to make their fight unaided. Some of the most *intelligent* and greatest men the world has ever known could hardly write their own names. Education is a wonderful thing if there is a solid foundation to build on—good, dependable hoss sense.

If we took as much interest in our children as we used to take in our livestock—especially our hosses—we'd have a better and saner world. If a lad early shows a liking and an interest in livestock or farming, we should educate him in that line. We already have institutions of learning which specialize in such things. To hell with astronomy and Latin and trigonometry! If your lad or lassie shows an aptitude for exaggeration and prevarication, and is continuously popping off and you can't beat it out of 'em—why then, just give he or she a course in law, politics or the newspaper business. Still, to be a real success in any of these professions requires considerable hoss sense.

BACK in the old days when hosses were the only means of travel and the country was unfenced and wide open, every spring and summer was hoss-breakin' time. It wasn't the best riders that were the best bronc-busters, like you see it done in the movies. No, the best bronc-buster was a man of great patience, a big batch of gray matter between his ears and considerable heft on the end of a rope. In other words, a successful bronc stomper had to have as much or mebbe more sense than the hoss he was trying to break. Such a man was scarce in those days, even as today. Such men are the kind of teachers we need in our public schools today. Thank the good Lord we have a few!

When the rough edge was knocked off the broncs, and you could stop 'em and turn 'em and get off an' on without them stampeding or sticking a foot in your vest pocket—then and not before, they were turned over to the regular cowboys to train. The bronc-buster would say to the boss: "Now that brown pony will make a shore enuf cuttin' hoss . . . that little feller will make a good night hoss . . . that big dun will make a good rope hoss . . . and that little pinto will make a good kid pony and one your wife can ride."

(Continued on page 53)

Comanches and Their Horses

(Continued from page 5)

And guarded your homes o'er the far frontier.

Meantime, the Comanches were reaching the climax of their raids into the border states of Mexico and on down into Durango, Zacatecas and San Luis Potosí. They lifted young women and children, who often developed into loyal members of the tribe, as well as horses and mules. The governor of Chihuahua, acting on a policy adopted by other Mexican states, contracted with a reckless band of American borderers to pay bounties on Comanche and Apache scalps—and the scalpers turned in hair of Mexican citizens along with that of hostiles. Lack of money in the treasury more than moral indignation broke the contract. In the calendar of the Comanches, September was the "Mexican moon"; in the calendar of the Mexicans, it was the "Comanche moon," though raids were not strictly confined to this month. Every fall, for a third of a century, beginning about 1830, the Comanches rode down established trails to despoil ranges and huddle inhabitants into ruin and terror hundreds of miles below the Rio Bravo.

Across the Llano Estacado of Texas, over the arid sub-plains of the Pecos, by Comanche Springs, where Fort Stockton was established to halt the Cossacks of the plains, through the mesa-topped hills on south, then through the roughs to the Rio Grande and on into the land of Comanche milk and honey, the main war trail made "a great chalk line. It was worn deep by the hoofs of countless travelers and was whitened by the bones of abandoned animals." In September troops of from half a dozen to a hundred Comanches, warrior women among warrior men, joined by Kiowas, Plains Apaches, Utahs from the Rocky Mountains, outlaws from other tribes, and renegades from Mexico, strung over it, riding for their carnival south of the Rio Grande. At this natural boundary, the scourgers fingered out, some to follow up the fertile valley of the Conchos to the mining camps and rancherias about Chihuahua City, some for expectant but impotent haciendas far west in Durango, others for other lodes between and beyond. Along in November and December the Great Trail again came to life with herds of cattle, horses, and mules from the Mexican supply grounds, with captives laced to their mounts, with hordes of herdsmen, and with outriders firing the prairie grass to balk pursurers. Then carrion crows marked the trail from the sky, while dust and smoke signaled it from below.

AMONG TRAVELERS with portraying hands, the incomparable George Frederick Ruxton rode his horse Panchito, followed by two pack mules, into the wide zone of destruction late in 1846. He was a civilized Englishman, fluent in Spanish and decided in character. The Comanches, he wrote, "generally invade the country in three divisions, of from two to five hundred warriors in each. Every year their incursions extend farther into the interior, as the frontier haciendas become depopulated by their ravages and the villages deserted and laid waste. . . . They are now (September) overrunning the whole department of Durango and Chihuahua, have cut off all communication, and defeated in two pitched battles the regular troops sent against them. Upwards of 10,000 head of horses and mules have already been carried off, and scarcely has a hacienda or rancho on the frontier been unvisited and everywhere the people have been killed or captured. The roads are impassable, all traffic stopped, the ranchos barricaded, and the inhabitants afraid to venture out of their doors. The posts and expresses travel at night, avoiding the roads, and intelligence is brought in daily of massacre and harrying."

COMING TO THE noted Hacienda de la Zarca in northern Durango in 1846, James Josiah Webb, Santa Fe trader, found all the people "in great dread of the morrow." The Comanches had been sighted. The people said that it was their custom to surround the hacienda, make prisoners of females, and "order the men to bring up the herd of horses." After selecting the best, if they had any tired or poor animals they would leave them, making the sign that they must be well cared for and be rested and fat when the Comanches made their next visit.

West of the Rocky Mountains and the Comanche range, "the great stealing road of the Apaches" into Sonora was hard-beaten by the hoofs of livestock captured in Sonora. Like the Comanches, the Apaches saw in international lines no barrier to horse-lifting.

American observers among the Comanches during the first half of the nineteenth century reported concentrations of their horses and mules numbering up to 3,000 and even 5,000 head, Spanish brands always prominent. Successful warriors owned from fifty to 200 head each. In the 1820's while Thomas James was swapping British strouding, calico, flints, knives, tobacco, looking glasses, and the like for Comanche horses, refusing many inferior ones but getting some worth "at least $100 each in St. Louis," a chieftain boasted to him that on the headwaters of the Red River his people had 16,000 head, "better than any he had bought." This may have been more than a boast. In 1867 an Indian agent named Labadi reported 15,000 horses and 300 or 400 mules concentrated about Comanche camps on the Texas plains. They were truly Horse Indians.

As "the sword outwears its sheath," the vigors of all powers decline and the stimuli of new continents, fresh philosophies, and revolutionary acquisitions in material things lose their glandular spur. The Comanches and other Bedouins of the plains did not have the horse long enough for the nerve it added to their energies to become enervation. They were cut down at their riding best, in their full richness of horse wealth, while the fit of vitality was still hot within them.

A Horse To Brag About

(Continued from page 13)

showing. It's not natural for a cow pony to get excited over a little rain storm brewing. But when Old Snip looked over at me and blasted out with a long loud nicker, I figured it was time to leave. I still swear to this day that horse was smarter than me and was just giving warning it was high time to drag out of there before it was too late. Sure enough it almost was.

Over to the east in the higher mountains, the clouds were having a family reunion and the more lively members were spitting out forked fire and deep down, rumbling noises. I could see the blue white sheets of rain pour out into the canyons and foothills. The storm was moving on out towards the flats and us, fast-like.

I buckled on my spurs missing the hole with the buckle tongue a couple of times because I was getting a little excited. I untied Old Snip and mounted up. I leaned over in the saddle and away we went. Snip seemed to understand that the whole idea was to get across all that barren ground before the rain reached us. If it did, we might have to sleep out on this side of the arroyo all night without any shelter. He was really moving now up and down . . . straining hard with his hindquarters on the up-grade and keeping his fore-legs out in front on the downgrade.

We didn't quite make it. About a quarter-of-a-mile out in the eroded flats, the rain caught us. I pulled up and took a look. There wasn't much to see, the rain was so heavy. As we moved out again I could feel the cold wetness already soaked through to the skin and the water running from the brim of my hat like it was coming off a tin roof.

Old Snip was beginning to slip and slide in the slick muddy clay. We kept going just the same. I was so wet now I didn't feel the coldness so much. We finally made it to Long Draw. I reined down a gradual slope out into the gravel covered bottom. Water was running in little muddy rivers everywhere. Then all of a sudden I could see nothing but water. A solid stream of reddish, muddy churning water! We were in real trouble! The heavy rain up in the mountains was just now reaching this part of Long Draw.

Before I had time to think, the water swirled up around my boot heels. Then it hit, a great big wall of mud, water, piñon sticks, pine needles and everything else that grows in the mountains. I dropped the reins and grabbed the saddle horn with both hands. My arms felt like they had been stretched out as long as a wagon tongue. I couldn't see and it felt like a whole ocean of water had spilled right on top of us. I know for sure this was it. I wanted to do some praying but I couldn't get my mind on it for worrying about holding on to that saddle horn.

I began to strangle and a lot of red, light and black spaces seemed to jump out of my head. I got a big suck at a bunch of air. It was mighty wet air as far as that goes but there wasn't quite enough water in it to drown a feller. We went splashing under again, up and out, down and under, over and over. After this had gone on for what seemed like about two long years I happened to remember hearing one old cowboy say a horse could swim better if you hung onto his tail instead of the saddle horn. They are only about two yards apart, but getting from that horn to that tail wasn't any simple act.

I had to take the gamble. If I missed I was a gone dog and I knew it. I heaved my body as far up on Old Snip as my strength would let me. Then I turned loose and grabbed! One hand caught tail hair! I was washed sideways and every other way. By this time I was sure there was as much water in me as there was out of me. Somehow I hung on and got hold with my other hand. Everything was muddy at this point, including my memory.

A long time later, at least it seemed a long time later, I noticed a horse's hind leg next to my face. I counted one, two, three, four, horse's legs. Then I realized I was lying in the mud and Old Snip was standing there with his head down, his sides bellowing in and out, breathing hard. I didn't mind that old sticky mud. No, siree, not one bit. I rightly loved it. I got up and put my arm across that bay pony's neck. I didn't say anything. I didn't have to. I knew he understood.

We stayed all night over at the line camp. Even if we were hungry and a little cold I didn't mind and I hope Old Snip didn't.

THE NEXT day about noon I rode up to Ed Young's place and let out a yell. He walked out, or I should say a hat came out with him walking under it, because he wore the biggest hat I ever saw. It was a real, honest-to-goodness old-time cowboy hat.

I said, "Robert Ion sent you this here horse." and I handed him the bill of sale. The best eyes in the world couldn't have made out what that piece of paper said. That old Long Draw mud and water had seen to that. "Reckon you'll have to get him to make you out another one," I said, tickled plumb to death. I figured I still had a chance somehow to come up with the wherewithal to own Old Snip for my very own. I told Ed what had happened, then I said, "Say, Robert Ion said you might be needing a hand."

"I might," he said, looking at me with those gleaming blue eyes across that hawk-looking, humped-up nose. "What can you do, boy?" he asked pointblank.

"Hell," I said, "I can do anything."

Several weeks later I knew that this was not exactly the whole truth. I know now that I stayed on at Ed's in the beginning because I wanted to be with Old Snip, but later on I liked it all the way around. That evening I helped him feed the horses and milk the cows. After supper I got up and helped his wife with the dishes.

This set real good with Mother. All the cowboys in the country called her Mother Young because she was such a top-notch cook, doctor and anything else a woman had to be to make a good wife and mother thirty miles from town right smack dab in the middle of all outdoors.

Ed had some good horses in his own right. He had broken broncs for the old Waggoner outfit in the early days and a lot of other big outfits and he wouldn't have anything but good horses around him.

I got to ride and work with them all. There was Old Sut, a coal black twelve-year-old. You could ride him all day and he'd never even break a sweat. Then there was Flax, the golden-maned sorrel—a good range roping horse; Apache, the big hard-bucking paint; Raggedy Ann, the little brown mustang that Ed had roped and broke himself; and Fooler, a blaze-faced chestnut—Ed's favorite. When the cowboys spoke about Fooler they would always say, "That Fooler's quite a horse, yep, he's one hell of a horse."

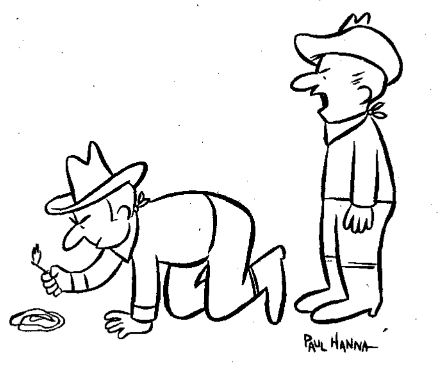
But none of them compared with Old Snip. As time went on he just got better and better. You could ride him all day without wearing him out because of his fast easy gait. He reined like a regular cutting horse, quick, but smooth and easy. Boy, that stop he had! Those hind legs would slide way up under him with his forelegs shoved out in front and you didn't feel hardly any jar at all. He learned to work a rope. He kept his head looking down the rope all the time and the slack pulled out.

I learned to heel calves on him. Ed and I worked a lot just by ourselves. It sure makes a calf easier to throw and brand if you rope him by the heels. I was getting so I hardly missed a loop when riding Old Snip.

One day Ed said, "We're going down to Eldon Butler's and help him brand about fifty head. He's interested in buying Old Snip. We've got plenty of horses around here and I need the money."

As we worked our way down out of the mountains towards Butler's I felt sort of sick. I cleared my throat and said, "Ed, how much you asking for Old Snip?"

"Aw, around a hundred I reckon the way he's turning out." He added, "Now, I really want you to show off what a heeling horse he is. That'll do more to sell him than anything else."



"No, no, Charles! Use dry chips!"

We cut the calves out from the mother cows and held them in a pole corral. The mothers bawled to beat sixty and stirred up a lot of dust. The branding irons were heating in an open fire. Eldon was getting the black leg vaccine ready and Ed was sharpening his knife getting ready to castrate the bull calves, except one they picked out for a breeding bull because of his good conformation and markings.

I was thinking, a hundred dollars, at the rate I was getting paid, I would be a hundred years old before I had it saved up. I really didn't feel any extra love in my heart right at that moment for Eldon Butler. He was a fine feller too.

Ed yelled, "We're ready, boy."

I rode out among the calves on Old Snip. He eased in till we had one in the right position, then I dropped a slow loop under one of the big bull calves. Most fellers make the mistake of throwing too fast a loop to be good heelers. You've got to kinda let it float down. Then just as the hind legs move against the loop you pull the slack and you've got him. The big calf began bucking and bellering but I turned Old Snip and dragged it to the fire. Eldon ran up and got hold of his tail and over he went.

Pretty soon you could smell the hair burning where they put the brand to him. Ed castrated, earmarked and vaccinated him while Eldon held. I let them have the slack and the finished product got up shaking his head wondering what in the world had happened to him.

I caught four in a row and felt kind of proud of myself until I noticed Eldon looking at Old Snip with mighty admiring eyes. I don't know what happened after that but it was the worst branding I ever attended. It took me about nine loops to catch every calf and even when I did, it looked like Old Snip and me couldn't keep from getting tangled up in the rope.

It was something or other all the time. I reckon that's the sorriest work we ever did together. I could see the disgusted look on Eldon's face. Ed was downright pale after all the braggin' he'd done about Old Snip. I guess we were all glad to get the job over with.

It was after dark when we unsaddled that night. I told Ed to go on in the house and wash for supper if he wanted to, I'd take care of the horses. I shucked out several ears of corn and forked some hay in the manger. I stood there in the dark awhile and smelled Old Snip. He smelled just like a horse, but not just any old horse.

THERE ALWAYS seems to be just a little bit of fun mixed up with all the trouble we have, like the time I sat up on Old Snip and looked at a white-faced cow as if she were some sort of varmint. The fall before, we had moved all Ed's cows down out of the mountains to the home pasture for the winter. We didn't move them all at one time, I can tell you that.

Ed had a grazing permit on national forest land and those cows were scattered out in small bunches over about 200,000 acres of mountains, hills, canyons, rocks and timber, but all the rest of his herd put together were easier to round up than this one old cow. She always took off into the thickest timber or down some rough canyon. She was nothing but trouble, so that's what we named her.

Now there she was out in the bog. There was plenty of grass on the outside but she had to go fall off in it and now if I didn't drag her out pretty soon she'd sink out of sight. I took the leather loop from the saddle horn and unwound the three wraps from the catch rope. I tied one end of the rope to my saddle horn and built a loop in the other end.

I whirled it a couple or three times and let it go. I had to catch her horns if I was going to be able to let her loose by myself. The loop settled down just where I wanted it and I spurred Old Snip in the opposite direction. Nothing moved. Old Trouble was really bogged down. I began to do some solid cussin' and sweatin'.

After awhile the old fool inched up out of the bog a little bit. "Now, Snip!" I yelled, "Now!" Old Snip threw all his weight and strength against that rope and out she came. She struck dry ground running and hit the end of the rope hard. Old Snip was braced. I felt the back of the saddle raise and pull the flank cinch tight against Old Snip's belly.

Now, in the first place I should never have tried this by myself. In the second place I should never got off Old Snip without somebody around, but that's exactly what I did. Old Snip backed fast, moving right and left trying to keep the rope tight. I worked in from the side trying to get to Trouble's head slightly behind her horns. She was slobbering at the mouth, shaking her head and straining with all she had against the rope. Her main idea was to run one of those sharp horns right square through me.

I finally got to her and gripped down with all my strength on her muzzle with one hand, twisting and holding a horn with the other. She slung me around but I stayed with her and pretty soon when she made a run forward there was some slack in the rope. I jerked hard and the loop came off her horns. I made a run for Old Snip and Trouble made a run for me. I could feel the breeze across my hind-end as she went by.

To this day I've never mounted as fast. Even then I was a mite slow. Trouble turned back and ran her horns under Old Snip's flank. He leaped up and away! I almost fell off. She made a couple more wild passes at us before she turned and trotted off. I reckon that was her way of thanking us for saving her life.

"OLD SNIP learned to work in timber. It got so I could tell when and what he smelled even when we couldn't see it. For instance, if it was a coyote or some other varmint out in the brush, he would throw one ear forward and then the other while looking toward the scent. If it happened to be cattle hiding in the brush, his neck would arch and he would pull over toward them. This saved lots of riding and looking in rough country. If it was a bunch of horses, he got a little extra excited and quickened his gait.

One day we got lost. I did, anyway. Suddenly I didn't know exactly where we were. The country looked different than I'd ever seen it. I noticed the fast-moving clouds above. Then everything was solid grey.

The wind came first in big gusts, then the snow. It hit wet, cold and mean. It was a blowing snow. I turned back down out of the high country, but I didn't really know where we were headed. First, the ground covered over; then the tree limbs began to pick it up. Every once in a while a big shower of snow would fall on us out of the trees when the wind shook it loose. My hands were getting numb in my thin leather gloves. My nose and ears were beginning to sting. The snow came on thicker and thicker.

I reined Old Snip this way, then that. It just didn't do any good. I had to admit I was completely lost. The blizzard never let up, in fact, it was just getting started. Before long I could just barely see Old Snip's thick black mane out in front of me. He was plowing along with his head low. The snow was drifting. Sometimes we'd go in up over my boot tops.

Finally I let Old Snip have his head. I just sat in the saddle and hoped he didn't fall off a sheer bluff. Soon I didn't feel anything. It wasn't so bad. Then I remembered hearing that was the time of greatest danger. So, I began to move my arms back and forth, back and forth, faster and faster, until I couldn't hold them up any longer. Then there was just a world of cold white, with Old Snip and me right in the middle of it.

I sat a long time wondering why Old Snip didn't keep moving. Maybe he'd frozen stiff standing up! Then there it was—a gate, by doggies. It was the horse pasture gate into Ed Young's Rafter E Y Outfit.

After I fed Old Snip about three times as much as he could eat and stood with my hind-end so close to the fireplace it just about scorched, I ate the biggest batch of hot biscuits, sow belly, and pinto beans that a man ever wrapped himself around.

That was twice Old Snip had saved my life. I don't know how he found his way down out of that world of frozen white, but he did.

I worked for the San Cristoval outfit for two years and then somebody got the idea I should go off and get some book learnin'. I had to leave Old Snip behind.

Ed sold him after I left to some rich Texas ranchers. Of course Ed didn't know him as well as I did or he'd never have done it.

I never did get a bill of sale to Old Snip, but I felt he was mine just the same. He belonged to me then and he does now—wherever he is.

UNDERTAKER

"Welcome to Deadwood, stranger!"

Harness Race

(Continued from page 28)

I was crouched down on the carpeted floor, holding onto the dashboard and leaning out, blinded by the mud splashing in my face. I was hollering, calling to the two horses, yelling at them to git, git, git! I was so close I could reach out and almost touch Nip's rump, calling to them for the last bid, half sobbing and bawling with strong emotion.

The wild, cheering roar of the crowd closed in from all sides, heedless of the mud and water that drenched them.

I knuckled the mud out of my eyes with one hand and looked around. Bob's team was a length away, almost scraping hubs with Will's rig. It was a race between the two teams for second place. I was reminded of the chariot race in *Ben Hur.*

The Tucker bays were a buggy length ahead when we crossed the finish line. B. D. Phillips, standing on a chair was waving his hat, letting out a war whoop, yelling like an Assiniboine. He had a stop watch in his hand as we finished a daylight length ahead.

I grabbed Nip's tail that had come undone, pulled it over the dashboard and hung on. Out of the corner of my eye I saw father lift his whip in a salute as we crossed the finish line.

"YOU did fine son," father's unsteady voice sounded a long way off in my mud-plastered ears. "Get back up on the seat and take the lines."

Never, if I live to be as old as Methuselah, will that moment ever come again. A horseman's victory, shared by as fine a span of horses as ever gave the best that was in the heart of a thoroughbred. And when father put the lines into my muddied hands, entrusting the Tucker bays into my care, he gave me something that was beyond value. He passed on his horsemanship and love for a horse to me as a legacy. Knowing that somehow I had earned it made me feel both humble and proud. It gave me an understanding of my parent that I had never before felt.

I walked the team to the livery barn. I unhooked the muddy traces from the singletree and unbuckled the neck yoke straps and hung collars and harness on wooden pegs. Then I led them around by halter ropes for a half hour until they were cooled out. After that I watered them slowly and filled their feed boxes with oats. I forked timothy and bluejoint into the mangers. While they ate I went to work with currycomb and brush and when I finished, their mahogany bay coats shone like polish on a gambler's shoes.

While Nip and Tuck stood hock-deep in fresh straw bedding, I rubbed their legs with strong-smelling horse liniment until the quart bottle was empty and my fingers were cramped.

Long after the barn man had finished caring for Lewis and Clark and Roulette and Faro, I was there telling the Tucker bays about how they had won the race. It was strictly horse talk, not meant for human ears.

I hadn't meant to spend the whole afternoon there, but I did. I was still there when my father finally located me. He said he had been hunting all over town for me. He looked at his watch and it was almost six o'clock. He said if I was to get outfitted from the skin out at the Mercantile, and get a hot bath and haircut at Shorty's Barber Shop, I'd better shake a leg. He handed me a ten-dollar bill and said we'd eat that chicken dinner on Will at the Great Northern Hotel.

He looked the bay team over. "Slick as seals," he said as we walked out of the barn, his arm across my shoulder. "You did a first-rate job on that team, son. Old Tom couldn't have done better." He asked me if I had taken a look at the other two teams.

I told him I saw to it that the horses were cooled out before they were watered and grained, had fresh hay in their mangers and clean straw bedding. I reminded him of what he'd always told me—never leave it to a livery stable hired hand to take care of a horse. Those two teams belonged to the ranch, and it was my job.

An hour later I came out of Shorty's Barber Shop in my town clothes. I'd had a bath and a haircut.

After dinner at the hotel with father and my brothers, I walked down the street, feeling warm and good inside. I didn't know a kid in town my age so I was going on a high lonesome. I had money in my pocket and there was nothing to stop me from painting the town a strawberry-pop red.

As I walked along whistling through my teeth I kept thinking of the play I had seen at the Great Falls Opera House—Dustin Farnum in *The Virginian.* I'd read the book twice and to my way of thinking the outlaw Trampas was the hero. And the Virginian had no business turning traitor to the cowpuncher who had been his friend. I likened Trampas to Kid Curry, and the Kid was my friend, and I felt I sort of belonged to the Wild Bunch.

I remembered the song that Trampas sang and I started humming it as I headed across the tracks for Doc Murray's Drug Store for a soda pop and some ice cream and candy.

"Ten thousand cattle straying . . .
I quit my range and traveled away,
So it's sons a guns,
That's what I say!
I've gambled my money
All away!"

I was Trampas in my black sateen shirt as I walked along with my new Stetson at an angle across my eyes.

Buckingest Bronc

(Continued from page 35)

His technique was something like this: at about the third jump he'd bog his head between his forelegs and kick off the lid. When he had the rider straining back against the taut rein he'd heave up his head violently, leaving the rein slack and the buckaroo without its support. Then he'd high-roll it for heaven, and when he came down, the rider remained windmilling in midair somewhere this side of the Pearly Gates.

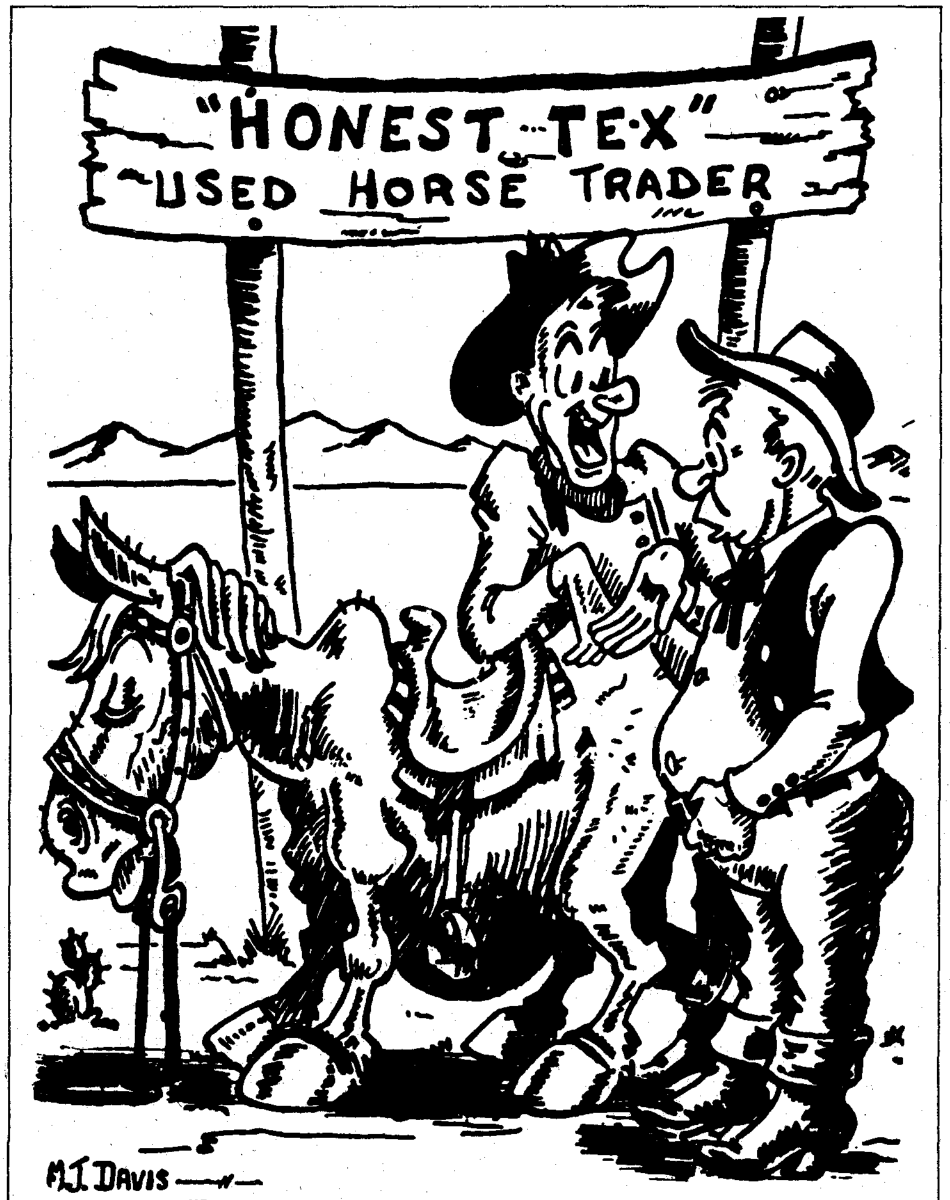
Temperamental Midnight was almost as hard to handle out of the arena as in. It wasn't that he was so poison mean; he was just ornery and stubborn and powerful proud.

He was right easy to lead, if he chanced to be going your way; but if his mind was set on something else, you couldn't budge him with an atom bomb. He'd never rear and slash at you with his hoofs, like some of the bandit broncs in the string, but he had a quaint little habit of sneaking up and biting a chunk out of your shoulder.

Mrs. Elliott was the only human who could handle him without the protection of armor plate. He'd eat oats out of her hand.

Verne swears the big black was gifted with a sense of humor. Sometimes when he'd kettled a rider into the dust he'd prance back, all wall-eyed and snorty, to where the dazed twister lay sunning his boot soles. Twenty thousand faces in the grandstand would go white as it appeared the unloaded rider was about to be trampled to death.

Before the pickup men could gather up the remains, Midnight would nuzzle the defeated foe gently as if saying, "Better luck next time, pardner." Then he'd look up with his shaggy forelock skewballed over one eye at a Will Rogers slant, swiveling his jaws like he was working on a chew of eating tobacco. It was his way of giving the cash customers the horse laugh.



"It's the latest model. You step down to get on it."

ONCE when he was bucking for the fun of it after pouring off an ambitious waddy, a hind hoof caught momentarily in a flopping stirrup. The cowboy's alibi, "I reckoned to get off when I seen he wanted to get on," was the debut of a gag that, in one form or another, is still going strong.

As a show bucker, Midnight led the pampered life of a Hollywood star. Freed from the toil of ranch life, he worked at his trade about three seconds daily, four times a week during the rodeo season, and in the off months ranged the pasture with his worshipful harem.

Verne and Ed refused to sell him at any price. They are said to have turned down $10,000 for the ace bucker that cost them $250. They carried a $5,000 policy insuring him against accident.

Because of the huge sums that frequently changed hands as the result of Midnight's uncorking, he was guarded as carefully as a prima donna against dirty work at the crossroads. Only once did the fixers penetrate this guard with their deadly needle.

Instead of exploding from the chute with his customary bang, as if he'd swallowed a bellyful of bed springs, the big black staggered weakly, halted with head drooping dizzily between widespread forelegs, and didn't even catback himself. As it was apparent that someone had slipped him a Mickey Finn, the judges called it "no contest" and required the rider to draw another horse out of the hat.

Midnight possessed more boxoffice appeal than any single attraction in the rodeo game. In 1928, Denver's National Western Livestock and Horse Show was facing the prospect of a dismal deficit, so a rodeo was launched as an added attraction, with Midnight playing the lead. He drew turn-away crowds and pulled National Western out of the hole.

Inevitably the wise guys in the grandstands began to sound off that it was impossible for any horse to be such a holy terror as Midnight was cracked up to be. Strictly under the hat, they'd tell you that Cousin Elmer knew somebody that once worked as a rodeo hazer who slipped him a straight tip that all the rodeo contestants who drew Midnight were paid to take a dive, just to help the big black gelding's newspaper buildup.

"The prestige to be won by conquering Midnight far outweighed the lure of any penny ante dive money," says Verne. "Any contestant would have sold his soul for the honor of being known as the man who rode the world's buckingest bronc."

IN 1932 the word was flashed from Pendleton that Fred Studnicka, an Oregon cowhand, had ridden the unconquerable Midnight. Partisans maintain the bronc was "home-towned." Local rules eliminated the customary starting chutes and provided for snubbing the horses to the saddle horn of a hazer while the rider mounted and, it was claimed, gave the starting judge too much discretion.

When Midnight's blindfold was jerked off, they say he was whipped across the eyes with it, startling him so he sat down for three seconds before beginning to buck. As these partisans describe the ride, the rider left the saddle, as was customary with Midnight, at the third jump.

"The timing judge fired his pistol when he saw Studnicka sailing into the air," Verne insists. "No one can convince me it took Midnight seven seconds to make those three pitches. Ed and I publicly offered to bet $10,000 Studnicka couldn't stick to Midnight under standard rodeo rules. The bet was never taken up."

But age was creeping up on the big black. He had developed ringbone from a bruise, causing soreness in his forelegs. Verne and Ed decided to have him shod, but it was like trying to slap a branding iron on a meteor. The horseshoer slung iron at everything that flew past and actually succeeded in getting a shoe on the off fore hoof before he cheated the undertaker by quitting.

Under standard rodeo rules a rider is disqualified if he loses a stirrup.

Says Verne, "They changed this rule at the Fort Worth show in 1933, so that blowing a stirrup meant only the loss of twenty points instead of disqualification. Floyd Stillings lost a stirrup but stayed with the sorefooted Midnight for the required ten seconds. Despite the Studnicka and Stillings rides, we claim Midnight was never ridden under standard rodeo rules."

Age caused the old campaigner's teeth to cup so he no longer could masticate his food thoroughly. They tried to "float" his teeth by filing the cups level, but they might as well have tried to file the teeth of a whirring buzz saw. They announced that Midnight would be retired after the 1933 Cheyenne show. He made his last competition rides and retired in an aureola of dust and glory by unloading Bob Askins and Turk Greenough, topnotchers among rodeo riders.

The following year he was taken to London, where he made his last public appearance in four exhibition rides at Wimbledon.

A sigh of relief went up from contestants when Midnight retired, but there were sighs of another nature. They had cussed the big black all around the arena, but it was the pet-name cussing a cowboy reserves for his favorite horse.

THE cowboy loves a tough and gallant foe. Midnight had earned the respect of the men who had been his bitter arena enemies, for he never knew how to quit.

When the boys are squatting around the blanket under the grandstand and the crap game palls, many a lengthy argument is chewed over, as to which was the buckingest horse of all time. But sooner or later the argument centers down to the two finalists, old Steamboat and Midnight.

Steamboat was foaled on the Frank Foss ranch in Wyoming in 1894. When he was a four-year-old, Sam Moore, foreman of the Swan Land & Cattle Co., bought him for his outfit, better known in rangeland circles as the Two Bar.

Legend has it that he was broken to the saddle and ridden for a season as a cow horse. But the following spring when he was brought in from the winter range, he was unridable. They called him Steamboat because of a nostril obstruction that caused him to make a snuffling, whistling noise while bucking, somewhat like a steamboat whistle.

The organized rodeo was unknown until the first Cheyenne Frontier Days celebration in 1896, although there were several traveling Wild West shows. The Cheyenne management procured wild horses by offering a $50 prize for the "worst bucker" entered by ranchmen.

Steamboat, bought by John C. Coble of Bosler, Wyoming, appeared first at Cheyenne and easily won the purse. Coble gave him to the Elks Club at Cheyenne. Later he was acquired by Charley Irwin, who operated a traveling show and supplied broncs to Cheyenne and a few other more recently organized rodeos.

LIKE Midnight, Steamboat was big and tough. Neither knew how to quit. Midnight was all black. Steamboat was black, with white stockings on his hind legs and a dab of white on one foreleg.

In 1914, when twenty years old, Steamboat suffered a leg injury in a boxcar and was destroyed. His carcass was left on the city dump at Cheyenne, although some would have you believe he is buried at Cheyenne's Frontier Park.

No adequate comparison of the bucking voltage of the two broncs is possible because few accurate records were kept in Steamboat's day, and such rules as existed were of the sketchiest nature. Usually the contestant was told merely, "Ride 'im slick, like a cowboy, and don't pull leather."

Sometimes a judge would fire his pistol when, in his opinion, the cowboy had made a "good ride." In many instances the rider was required to stay in the saddle until the bronc hiked its head, the equine equivalent of saying "uncle."

Steamboat was ridden by Verne Elliott, Dick Stanley, Ed McCarty, Frank Schneider, Thomas F. Minor and perhaps by others. Verne rates Midnight the better horse.

'Way back in the early eighties, when Jim Kid was in his prime, he bore the reputation of being the only rider who never had been thrown. The old-timers like to speculate as to what might have happened had the unthrowable rider tangled with an unridable horse like Steamboat or Midnight.

Jim Kid, christened James G. Willoughby, for years was the top-hand bronco buster with Buffalo Bill's Wild West show. He accompanied the Bill show to Paris and there won a $10,000 bet for Colonel Cody by taming an "unridable" French stallion. Years later he died in California under the hoofs of a mankilling horse.

On November 5, 1936, Verne Elliott found twenty-one-year-old Midnight dead in the pasture. The old warrior is buried on Verne's ranch near Johnstown, Colorado.

SHATKA
BEARSTEP

"I almost forgot to tell you she sort of kicks with her front feet too."

When the word was passed that the gallant old bronc was bucking his way down yon side of the divide, it found the rodeo boys holed up in ranch bunk houses for the winter.

Most of the time the typical rodeo rider is as talkative as a hen that has just laid an egg. But there are times when his lip is buttoned, and this was one of those times. When they heard the Midnight bronc had cashed in his chips, most of 'em said nothing, but just turned their backs, the way you do when the campfire smoke smarts your eyes.

If you savvy cowboy lingo, you'll know what one rider meant when he said:

"Midnight was the kind of a hoss that you could go to the end of the trail for."

That says it all.

Bill Tilghman's "Prairie Queen"

(Continued from page 29)

The chief nodded that he would accept. Then he spoke to his son who disappeared and came back a few minutes later with his sister, who was a good-lookin' Indian girl. The chief spoke to her in Injun and pointed to Bill. The girl gave one look at Bill, then began to cry. That is, as near to cryin' as an Indian ever does, for Indians don't go around sheddin' their emotions like wild cherry leaves.

Bill looked at her in astonishment, because he couldn't see why the sight of him would make her cry.

A tremendous argument took place between the girl and the chief. The chief kept pointin' at Bill and evidently sayin' something which was complimentary.

Meanwhile the girl was studyin' him, then broke out with, "I don't like him."

The chief said, "Why don't you like him?"

"Me like Running Elk," said the sufferin' girl. "Me no want him," she said pointin' at Bill Tilghman.

Bill's face was wreathed with astonishment, like a Christmas tree with popcorn. "What did you say?" he managed to ask.

The girl repeated what she'd said.

Then the whole thing came to light. The chief's daughter was also named "Prairie Queen" and the chief thought that Bill was tryin' to buy the daughter!

When the chief got it through his head, he made Bill add ten to the deal; a horse, it seems, bein' worth more than a daughter.

Bill led her away, "her" now referrin' to the filly.

And that's how Bill Tilghman got one of his race horses.

Editor's Note: Here's an example of the way we research our material. We sent Mr. Croy's story to none other than Mrs. Bill Tilghman to check—and her comment on the story follows.

Thank you for sending me the Homer Croy story. Of course, it has the inimitable Croy touch and will go well with your readers.

George Bolds was associated with Bill Tilghman quite a lot and his standing is proved by the fact that Bill wired him to come from Indiana to help carry off the records from Cimarron.

Bill liked race horses and maintained, at times, a stable of several horses in training and raced them at the Kansas City and St. Louis tracks. In the West, he always had some fast horse with which he would make matches, as that was the customary form of racing there. No track was necessary, just a piece of ground. Men were chosen on the spot for judges. Bill was one of the two or three men who built the first race track at Dodge City and promoted a fair.

The story of Bill's horse, Chief, is related in my book, *Marshal of the Last Frontier*. This horse was a real thoroughbred from Kentucky, part of a carload shipped out by Lucien Maxwell for his ranch. The Indians stampeded them after they left the railroad. The colt grew up and belonged to the Kiowa chief, White Deer. He had beaten everything in the four tribes and no money could buy him. But Dutch Henry raided the Indians' horse herd, driving off a bunch of twenty or thirty and Chief was among them. Bill bought him off Henry, who wanted to go back on the sale when he found out that was the famous race horse of White Deer.

Indian ponies were not wonders of speed, for the Indians knew nothing of breeding horses. They liked racing and a fast pony was a prized possession. The Osages, who got their stock from the whites in Missouri, had better animals on the whole.—Zoe A. Tilghman.

Steamboat—King of the Buckers!

(Continued from page 43)

hooves slammed against the ground. He rode Steamboat to a run. But Jack Maring paid for it. He couldn't eat a meal for two weeks.

FROM 1908 to 1914, Steamboat piled up the best of riders. In 1913, Col. C. B. Irwin's Rodeo show bought him and Steamboat became the most widely-traveled horse in the world.

A lady who saw him in 1910 says: "I'll never forget Steamboat. Every movement he made had a kick behind it. And he put everything he had into everything he did.

"To look at him, you'd think he was a rich man's riding horse. But when he started to buck. Oh my! I ache all over just to remember it!"

Interest in him still percolates today. The University of Wyoming, at Laramie, wants to raise money for a statue of him with Guy Holt up. It is felt that Steamboat is the perfect example of good sportsmanship and hard-hitting, unquenchable courage.

When not in the arena, Steamboat fooled many would-be conquerors. He grazed peacefully, didn't shy at people and never showed high-strung, skitterish ways.

One such rider, Pecos Carver, misjudged Steamboat's power. He wore a pair of fancy-beaded moccasins for his ride. In fact, his whole outfit looked like that of a "Las Vegas Cowboy."

Pecos never had a prayer. In ten to a dozen jumps, Steamboat dynamited out to the far fence, sunfishing all of the way. He halted, made a complete swap, and jounced to one side. The switch nearly broke Pecos in two. His moccasins flew off, leaving him in socks. In a matter of seconds Pecos sailed wide and slammed into the dirt, thrown by a vicious pitch and bounce.

Thereafter, when wearing moccasins, Pecos stayed on the fence.

Steamboat's last contest took place in Salt Lake City in 1914. Placed in a corral overnight, he tore himself up on the rough hewn fence poles during a very severe thunder and lightning storm.

When the show returned to Cheyenne, he was sick. The "vets" who examined him said he had blood poisoning and couldn't be cured.

So, after 13 years of battle, Steamboat lost his last. When the word got out that the old warrior was to be shot, all of his former riders gathered to visit him. And to make sure, a vicious murderer was brought from the state penitentiary to fire the shot. Tom Horn didn't miss.

In Cheyenne, where he began his bronc days, Steamboat lies buried back of the grandstand in Frontier Park.

Steamboat, in his prime, had no peer in his art of cracking off riders. He dumped off every one of the best riders of his day. And he did it without tricks. Nor did he have to be spurred and fanned to make him buck.

The rider who didn't screw himself down in the saddle at the very start never had another chance. With the speed of light, Steamboat launched himself into the air and came down on rigid legs in disc-crunching jolts.

Even today, no bronc can touch him. Steamboat is still "King of the Buckers!"

Fastest Stage Run in History

(Continued from page 40)

vehicle had ever crossed over those same roads, mountains and deserts. But it had cost Holladay a pretty penny—$25,000 in addition to broken-up stages, dead horses and weary drivers. It was then and still is the fastest time ever made over that route by any horse-drawn vehicle.

Banner lines blazed across front pages the country over:

OVERLAND CUTS MAIL TIME
BY 5 DAYS

Holladay became an international figure overnight. Mayors presented him with keys to their cities and New York paraded him up Fifth Avenue while he tossed gold coins into the screaming crowd.

Congress could do but one thing—award the Overland the mail contract for another year because it was the fastest.

For Holladay the run had been an excellent investment, for he was to retain the mail contract for a number of years, until he had built the greatest transportation system in the world, up to that time.

He sold it eventually and delved into other ventures. The final curtain came down on July 8, 1887, when he was sixty-eight. He died in Portland, Oregon, and is buried there.

Mementos of his far-flung stage line remain even today. Concords bearing the legend, "Overland Mail & Express Company," are still to be found, and when you see one in a museum, or in the storage barn of some State Pioneers who trot out their rolling stock and parade it every Pioneer Day, you can be sure it will be well-polished and preserved for it's worth a small fortune.

Weston, Missouri, where the Holladays got their start, is still "headquarters" when you want to know something about Ben, or about Dave, who started the big distillery there which produces the famed McCormick whisky. They will even point out to you the spot where Ben put together his first wide-tired wagons that helped make him famous, and which put Weston on the map to stay.

"Believe me, I ain't riding this character on the way back!"

Bob Tales

(Continued from page 47)

By the time the busters had put the broncs through kindergarten they knew pretty much all about 'em. Then the hosses were divided out among Bill and Sam and Tom to train, to be put through high school, and those that panned out good were put through college to finish their education. The hoss trainers wouldn't try to train a high-headed, star-gazing, limber-necked cayuse for a cuttin' hoss, nor a flighty-figetty owl-headed animal for a night hoss or a kid pony. They used hoss sense.

Some hosses—like some kids—weren't worth a damn for anything. They wouldn't quit pitching and kicking and raising all-around hell. When you'd pitch your rope on one of them, you'd have to choke him down to bridle and saddle him. Just pure cussed and owl-headed and hard to learn. They were used for drive or circle work. It wasn't necessary for a drive hoss to have much intelligence—just git up and git and never tire. When he was unsaddled and his bridle slipped off, the puncher would give him a swift kick in the rear end. That was all the petting he got, and all he deserved, I reckon, for being so dumb. Those were the kind of hosses we shipped off to the farms in Louisiana and to the Rough Riders during the Spanish-American War. We and as for the Rough Riders—well, any kind of a cayuse was good enough for a Rough Rider, just so he'd go.

We don't train hosses any more to cut and rope and night herd. Now, by gravey, we train 'em to chase a little ball and to go full speed and collide with other fool hosses chasin' the same little ball! Also, our modern-day hosses have to pace and canter and single-foot for the pleasure of the dudes and dudesses. A cowboy on the old-time ranches wouldn't ride a gaited hoss at all—they couldn't get over the malpais and gullies and through the brush, nor stop and turn quick. But nowadays we don't need any more trained hosses on the ranches. We've got our branding and dehorning chutes, and cut 'em through gates. So it's adios, old cow hosses.

(Continued on next page)

And it shore looks like adios to many other things in the cow country—all over the country, in fact. A youngster don't even need to be trained in penmanship; we have our typewriters. Mathematics? Heck, no! We have adding, subtracting and multiplying machines to take care of all that. We also have television and canned music, canned oratory and canned yodeling. All we need to do is to sit down at home, let our eyes bug out and our ears hang down and look and listen. We get everything from everywhere right at home, without lifting a finger.

Danged if I know what the world is coming to nor when! Some of our most learned scientists predict that within another century or two we will lose, through non-use, our thinking facilities and the use of our lower limbs. One thing is sure—we've about quit doing any walking already. Paw drives a jeep on the range; Maw drives a two-ton car to the super market; Sonny Boy drives a beat-up hot rod to high school. So it goes these days, and some folks call it progress. Me—I call it something else, but the Editor can't print it in a family magazine like *True West*.

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"I'd like to know who in the hell taught him that!"

I Spent Christmas on A Horse

(Continued from page 41)

to the Moore ranch, a distance of about five miles. I made it okay.

TOM MOORE saw me ride up and came out to bid me welcome, for visitors were few at that lonely ranch. He told me it had been many days since they had seen another human being—and now it had to be on Christmas Day, with a sad message like mine.

In those times every ranch was a place to eat and rest, whether the traveler be friend or stranger. Tom invited me in to eat the best Christmas dinner I ever had, for I was plenty hungry and cold. First he stabled my horse at a manger full of hay; then took me inside the house to meet the family and sit down at table with them.

We had deer meat, potatoes, gravy, and hot biscuits. Tom's few cattle were too valuable to be butchered for personal use, so Tom got meat for the table with his rifle—elk, deer, antelope, sage chickens, and rabbits. He had no money with which to buy a turkey; no place to buy one anyhow. Even the ranchers with money bought groceries only twice a year—spring and fall, if the ranches were in the isolated back country, as many were. For some ranchers it was a trip of several days with a two or four-horse team and wagon.

Tom was too broke to go to the funeral, but he wrote his answer to the telegram after dinner and silently handed it to me. I started back at once, as I was worried about being caught on those Plains in the storm after dark.

My horse plodded slowly up the canyon head-on into the storm. We had gone but a mile or so when I noticed he was getting jumpy and uneasy. This shouldn't have happened to a tired mount bucking a blizzard. I looked back to see two big gray lobo wolves on our trail. These were ugly devils, sometimes called buffalo wolves, as they stand higher at the shoulders than at the hindquarters. From then on I rode with my chin over my shoulder, waiting for them to make a move. There was nothing I could do. I dared not urge my horse to a faster gait, too many tough miles remained ahead and he might play out entirely if I pushed him. Anyhow, the wolves could have kept up with us easily even if I *had* spooked and went to quirting my horse.

So I just plugged along, with the wolves getting bolder and closer. Apparently by this time they had figured out that I had no gun and was harmless. (Today, forty-six years later, I still wonder how a wolf can tell when a man or an animal is weak and near exhaustion.)

When we reached the wire gate at the head of the canyon and the edge of the Plains, we were really in trouble. The wolves were now only a few feet behind me—so close I was afraid to get off my horse to open the gate. *Now*, I thought desperately, *if only I had another rider with me and we had fresh horses, we could rope them both. Twenty-five bucks apiece bounty for wolves—and we cowboys could use that kind of dough!*

Crazy thinking in a spot like mine—but the thought gave me an idea. A lariat rope is always a good weapon, and mine was on the saddle as always. I took it off, spilled the loop out of the end—I didn't want to catch one of them—and turned my horse to face them. Yelling like a Comanche on the warpath, I dismounted and threw the end of the rope at the ornery critters. The wolves crouched and snarled, then whirled and took out. A short distance only, but they retreated. Still hollering and waving the rope, I got the gate open, led my horse through, closed the gate—we don't leave gates open in my country—mounted and rode off.

I guess the wolves figured the pair of us weren't as weak as we appeared to be, for they didn't come through the fence after us. But our troubles were not over. The storm had a hundred-mile sweep across the Laramie Plains, and we had to face it. Our dim trail was soon lost in the deep snow; ten miles to go with visibility zero. (That phrase hadn't been coined in 1911!)

WHEN a rider is lost, a good horse will generally take him home if given his head. However, horses don't like to face a storm, and I wasn't sure whether mine would or not. I figured it was safer and smarter to keep him facing the wind. This is good policy only if the wind doesn't change direction, but I had to take that chance.

I did some fast calculating. The Laramie River crosses this desolate stretch of plains, and the ranch was on the river. So—if I could hit the river, all I would have to figure was whether I was up or downstream from the ranch. A helluva gamble, but at least I'd have a fifty-fifty chance of being right. Somehow the odds didn't seem so good when my life was at stake.

My horse's eyelids froze shut and ice formed in his nostrils. Feeling sorry for the poor cuss, I got off and wiped his eyes and nose. I felt sorry for me, too; I had the same trouble. The horse was more important; I knew that without him I'd never leave these blizzard-swept plains alive. Maybe neither of us would get out alive—but I tried not to think of that.

Darkness fell, but we still headed into the wind. No way of telling how far we had come nor how far we had to go, nor even if we were going in the right direction. It was the doggondest lonesomest feeling to know that somewhere off in the howling dark your buddies were sitting in a warm bunkhouse and wondering if you were ever going to show up alive . . . I quit thinking that way—but then I got to thinking about Portugee Phillips and the long winter ride he made from Fort Phil Kearney to Fort Laramie in 1866. Phillips' horse collapsed and died when he reached Laramie. I wondered if mine could keep going. He did—and we hit the river.

I couldn't tell whether we were upstream or downstream from the ranch, so I decided to let the horse figure it out. I got off, held a loose rein though I was chilled to the bone and the horse about to quit. *Walking will warm me up a mite, and the weight off will help the horse,* I thought dully to myself as I plodded along.

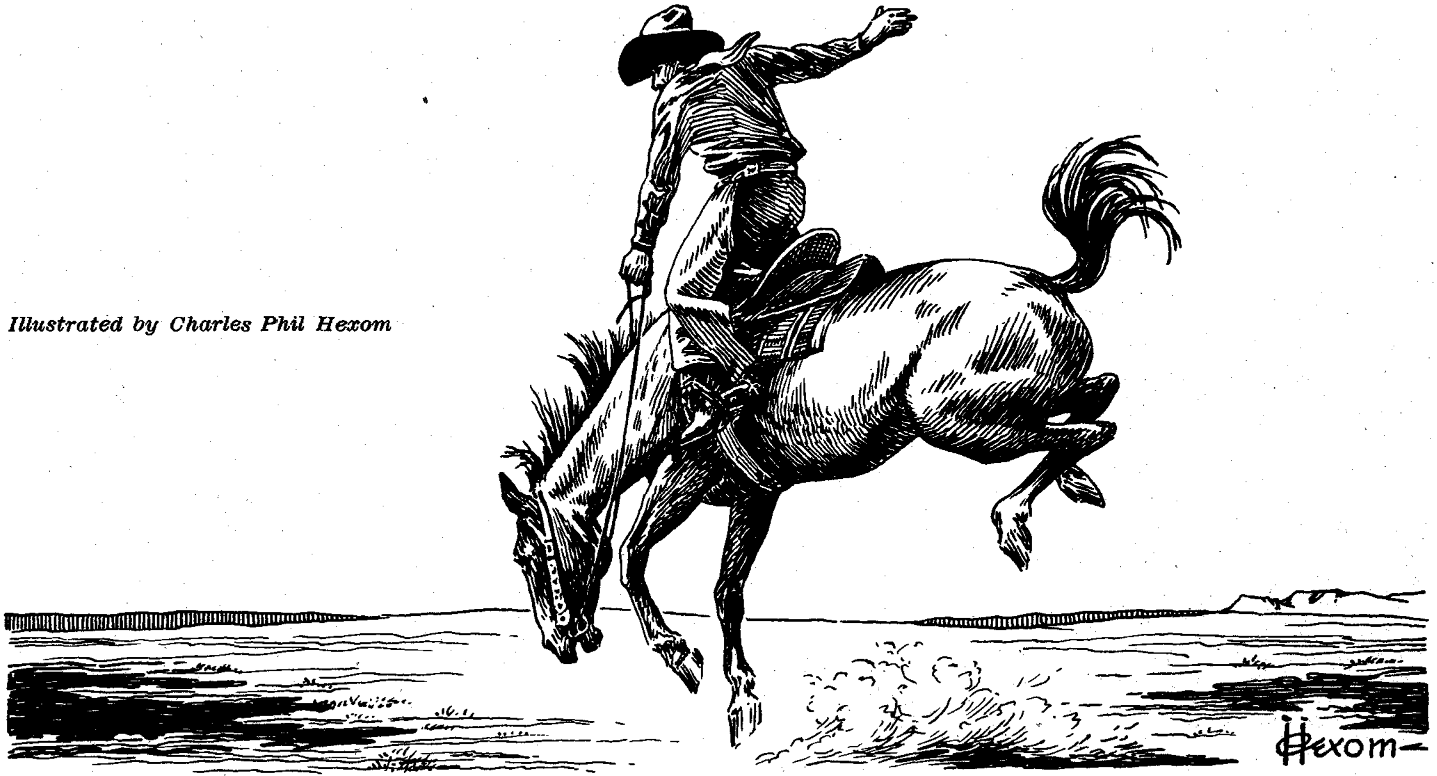
It was the right hunch; that good, good horse led me right to the ranch about a half-mile away. The boys whooped when they saw me, stripped off my icy clothes and hustled me into my bunk. And just like Portugee Phillips had said in 1866, I mumbled: "Never mind me, take care of my horse!"

A fiction story would end here at the dramatic high point, but this is truth so there's more to tell. I'd seen that Tom Moore was having it tough out there in that wild country. More especially, his wife and kids were having it tough, for Tom could take it even though his boots had a gaping hole in the side and he was walking practically barefoot in the snow.

I think the Moores had purposely failed to tell the children that it was Christmas, for there was no way they could observe it. Those kids had but one toy, a ball that Mrs. Moore had sewed out of rags. When I told the boys the story, they passed the hat and collected a right substantial stake. We went to town and bought those kids a whole bag full of toys for a belated Merry Christmas. I had the privilege of delivering the toys; told the kids old Santa Claus had been delayed by the blizzard. You never saw such surprise and joy on kids' faces in your life! I never enjoyed *any* Christmas as much as that one. Made a man misty-eyed just to watch those happy kids whoop it up.

Tom's little herd grew and multiplied. The last I heard of him, he had a modern home, an automobile, and had put the kids through college. And, like so many Westerners, he did it all with his own two hands and the help of a loyal, loving, hard-working wife and family.

Illustrated by Charles Phil Hexom



When Booger Red Rode The Man-Killer Grey

By J. FRANK DOBIE

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I have heard that somebody is writing a book about Booger Red. Few people in his lifetime knew his baptismal name and fewer know it now, but the name Booger Red lives on. He may not be worth a whole book, but any man whose tradition stays green for fifty years is worth at least a biographical sketch. It has been almost that long since I saw him ride a bad pitching horse. This was before rodeos were organized as they are now, and Booger Red was going about the country with a wagon, two or three helpers and several horses giving exhibitions of bronc pitching. The fee for spectators might have been as high as four bits. I forget.

This story about a ride he made and the horse he rode is not mine. The byline belongs to Joseph J. Good, who used to be a Texas cowboy and who is now writing his reminiscences. He has given me permission to publish this episode. He was at the Fort Worth Stock Show about 1898 when he saw the horse and the man. At that time the arena was a patch of prairie land on which some corrals had been built. The spectators were in buggies, on horses, on foot. There were no stands of seats. When a horse came out of the corral, he had the whole country to pitch in.

Suddenly a dappled grey horse about *fifteen-and-one-half hands high*, weighing around 1,000 pounds, that had been roped inside the corral broke through or over the plank fence and was out where everybody could see him. But the roper held on to the rope and with help soon choked the struggling horse down. Then a saddle was put on him while he was held down, men rolling and pulling him around so that it could be girted up. A very young man, just a boy, got into the saddle, taking the reins, as the horse was allowed to rise. In a flash the grey was upright. In another flash he had "bogged his head" and was pitching as hard as a cornered tiger fights for life. His motion was one jump forward and the next jump a zigzag in which he writhed all the muscles of his body. That close-cuppled body was beautiful, the short back, rounded hips, beautifully proportioned neck and legs all magnificently muscled. The sun brought out the dapples in his sleek grey. His mane and tail flowed with his powerful movements. His head, broad between the eyes, bore little resemblance to the jug-heads of some demented outlaws. He looked like a top cutting horse—except for the whites of his eyes.

As he pitched there on the Fort Worth prairie he seemed to put increasing power into his fierce zigzags, but the boy on his back kept a perfect seat, pulling hard on the reins, for maybe forty feet. Then, as suddenly as if he had been shot by a bullet, he dropped down over the grey's left shoulder. By the time he reached the ground the grey had plunged forward far enough to kick him a full blow in the chest. The horse seemed to step on him, bearing down with full weight, and to kick him with one movement.

AMONG the explanations that followed, one was that the left stirrup leather broke, another that the string lacing the stirrup leather broke. The way the rider fell indicated that something beyond the action of the horse had detached him suddenly and completely from his firm, balanced position in the saddle. It was about ten o'clock in the morning when

(Continued on page 63)

Old-timers remember the day well—the day Booger Red jumped atop that killer horse. It may have been the greatest man-vs.-horse duel in Western history

THE BIG DOUBLE CROSS

BONUS!

Excerpt taken from

THE GOLDEN FRONTIER:
THE RECOLLECTIONS OF
HERMAN FRANCIS REINHART,
1851-1869

—Edited by Doyce B. Nunis, Jr.

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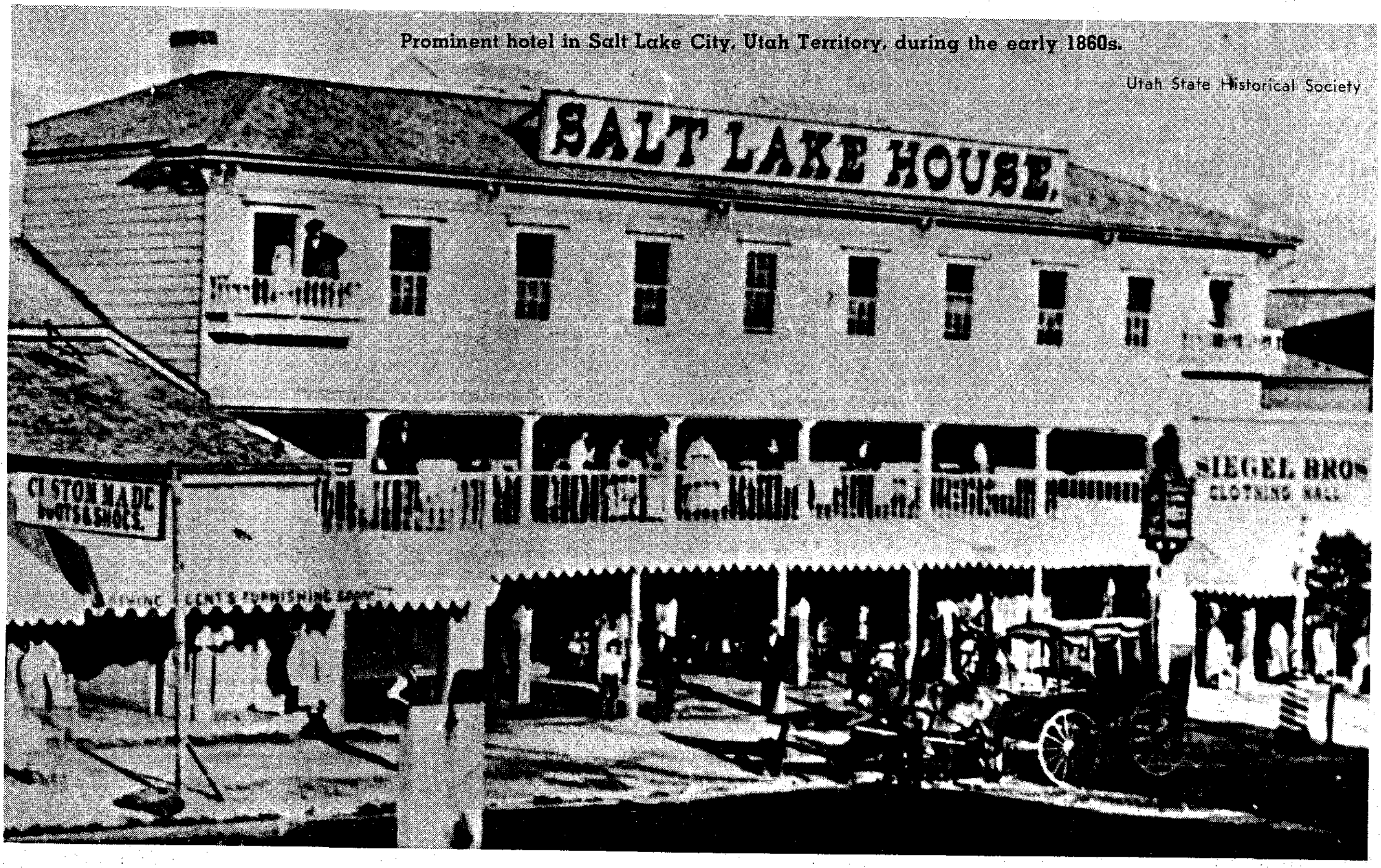
By

HERMAN FRANCIS REINHART

Eighteen years of hard work were bound up in the stolen horses. Reinhart was going to find them or tear up Utah singlehanded!


SALT LAKE HOUSE
SIEGEL BROS
CLOTHING HALL
CUSTOM MADE
BOOTS & SHOES
GENTS FURNISHING GOODS

Prominent hotel in Salt Lake City, Utah Territory, during the early 1860s.

Utah State Historical Society

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

Editor's Note: Herman Francis Reinhart spent twenty years in the mining country or on the fringe of it, and when he finally climbed aboard an eastbound train at Evanston, Wyoming, in 1869, he had an indelible memory of the hopes and frustrations of the West.

The men who, like Reinhart, sought the golden frontier were not an articulate group, and the written records of their lives are few and fragmentary. But Reinhart in his later years recorded his experiences in five long narrow ledgers. After his death, his daughter allowed the diaries to be typed for publication.

The incident printed here occurred in the winter of 1868 when Reinhart was working as a teamster, hauling passengers, supplies and equipment in Utah and Montana.

THE DAY I got (to Salmon City) Ed Hutchinson, an old Indian Creek, California, acquaintance, came down from Leesburg with another gambler named Hill, and they wanted to go right down to Salt Lake City, and I found some more passengers who wanted to go to winter there, and in the Spring they wanted to go to the Sweetwater or South Pass City Mines, a new discovery. So I concluded to load up the two wagons that I had with me with passengers and freight . . . and let George Woodbury take them down, and then take the eight horses and the two wagons and go some place and stay and recruit horses until I came, for I concluded to winter in Salt Lake Valley. . . .

I kept with them until I got to my turning-off place to go back to Helena. We all stayed at Hall's overnight, and old Major Henry Switzer, the passenger who was to drive the teams with George Woodbury, had been stopping here, and we had some way freight for Hall. I bid the boys all goodbye and took my pinto horse with his saddle, and I left George some money for expense, and told him to collect freight at Salt Lake City, and I started back towards Helena to get my other horses I had left on the ranch at a little town called Montana. . . .

I got back the 19th of November, and found I could get a lot of passengers to Salt Lake City at a good price if I had a good conveyance. I found an eleven-passenger heavy thorough-braced coach, one of the J. C. Oliver Stage Company's, and bought it for about $300, with some harness; and I bought another set of harness, so as to work six horses on the coach. I got some repairing and bought a large brown horse of one of the passengers who was to go to Salt Lake City with us, for $75, making me fourteen head. The man was a carpenter, and I took a chest of tools for him. I sold my Schutler wagon for $125, for I had no use for it, and got all ready, with provisions for the trip, for we expected to have a chance of being caught in the storms in crossing the Rocky Mountains so late in the season.

My passengers were George Hurt, Alex Williams, Charles Fish, William Richmond, Robert Rippley, Clay Thompson, Willey the carpenter, Frenchy Duvall and Fuller—in all, eight passengers, at $246. We got all started and had a good time until we got into the mountains in the snow, and had to do some hard roughing and driving, but got over the mountains to Idaho Springs in some awful snowstorms and snowdrifts. But by all working well we got over the Rocky Mountains all right and got nobody froze or hurt.

The boys passed their time in keeping the curtains down and keeping the snow and cold out, and playing cards. I had to sit on the outside and drive, but sometimes one would spell me for a while till I got a little warm inside, but I was dressed warm in a good cavalry overcoat and fur cap, and plenty of buffalo robes to wrap up in. We had so many toll roads, bridges, and ferries that it took quite a little pile of money to pay our way, and when we stopped close to houses in rough weather we would get the privilege of making our beds down on the floor by paying 50 cents per bed near the fire. . . .

Got to Case Ward, a small town, next to Sessions, where I found George Woodbury and the eight horses and two wagons. I changed horses and put on my two blacks and two bays, and with the two roans made a spanking six-horse coach team.

We got into Salt Lake City in good style, drove up to the Salt Lake City Hotel, kept by Little, son-in-law of Brigham Young, Sr., where several of my gambling passengers got off, and Clay Thompson too. The City looked fine to me, and I thought it was the nicest small city I ever saw. The streets were very wide, the gutters flowed with cool clear water from the mountains above, and the buildings were fine brick, some of them four stories high. The Tabernacle and theatre and Bee Hive Buildings were all very fine, and on the side of the mountains northeast, not over one mile, was Fort Douglas flying the United States flag, the old Star Spangled Banner—it was a great sight. . . .

NEXT DAY we got all unloaded, bought some provisions, and prepared to hunt up a place to make our winter quarters. On December 19th started in the morning with the two four-horse wagons and the six-horse coach to go west some forty-five miles to a place called Stockton or Silver Canyon. The first day out we stopped at an English Mormon's. The next day, the 20th, we got to a small town called Tooel(e).

It commenced to snow fearfully that night, but the Mormon we had put up with gave us a good supper. There was a wedding of his daughter, and they danced all night, but we slept well and had a splendid breakfast in the morning. Our landlord was a New Yorker (State), and his wife from Connecticut, and were both regular Yankees and knew how to get up a good meal, and after we went into camp six miles away, sometimes we used to come to get a good meal got up for us. They were fine clever old-fashioned farmers, but Mormons (he had two wives). The last wife a young healthy robust English girl, not over nineteen or twenty years old; some of the first wife's children as old if not older, but she seemed to make a good servant for his first wife, and she did not seem to care.

We got a late start on account of the snow still falling, and we got to Stockton, a mining town of 200 or 300 inhabitants, a hotel, two or three stores, two saloons and blacksmiths, butchers, etc. We got some dinner and inquired for a good place to winter our stock, and were told of a place up a canyon, called Silver Canyon. . . .

Our big tent had been the hospital tent of the Gallatin Army, when Governor Thomas Francis Meagher went out from Virginia City; I had bought it at auction after the war. It was about 12' or 14' by 22', high wall. The wagons all around made a good shelter, and we built a fireplace at the front, cut cedar boughs and covered the ground and spread blankets and made us bunks, and when we had a good fire we felt quite comfortable.

There was an old adobe house a quarter of a mile above us, but it looked too damp and cold to fix up to live in, but two miners came in with a few pack animals, and lived in it, and they were good company for us to pass away the long days and nights. One named Burns, an Irish sailor, was good company, and he and his partner had been in the Blackfoot Mines and at Deer Lodge. We got all straightened up in a few days, and had our Christmas suppers in Stockton at the hotel. . . .

New Year's Day, 1868, George and I went on horseback to our Yankee Mormon friends at Tooel(e), and had a good dinner, and I bought a lot of reading matter, papers, magazines and books, for $3 the bunch, and it kept me in good reading for the time. We used to go up in the hills about twice a week, and bring down the horses to make them drink, for they would eat snow and not come down if not drove down. The weather was awful cold, and considerable snow, but somehow the horses kept under the low cedar trees and would paw the snow off and get to the green bunch grass, and got fat.

Some four or five years before, some soldiers or California Volunteers (miners) with General Connor had found some silver ore, prospecting in this canyon, and there was great excitement about it, and some New York company, and some German company and several different ones had built up smelting works close to Stockton (the town being named after the California town of Stockton, General Connor's home), and the whole country was staked off and hundreds of shafts sunk, and tunnels run into the hills, and found very rich.

But the cost of transportation to the East was too high, for the ore would have to be hauled in wagons to the Missouri River, and then on trains by rail to New York, and on to Wales, for there was no works to separate the silver ore from the lead, and transportation from Salt Lake City to Omaha was worth 25 cents per pound. It was found they would have to wait until the railroads would be built before it would pay. I heard old General Connor had about broke himself up prospecting and then building the smelting works. . . .

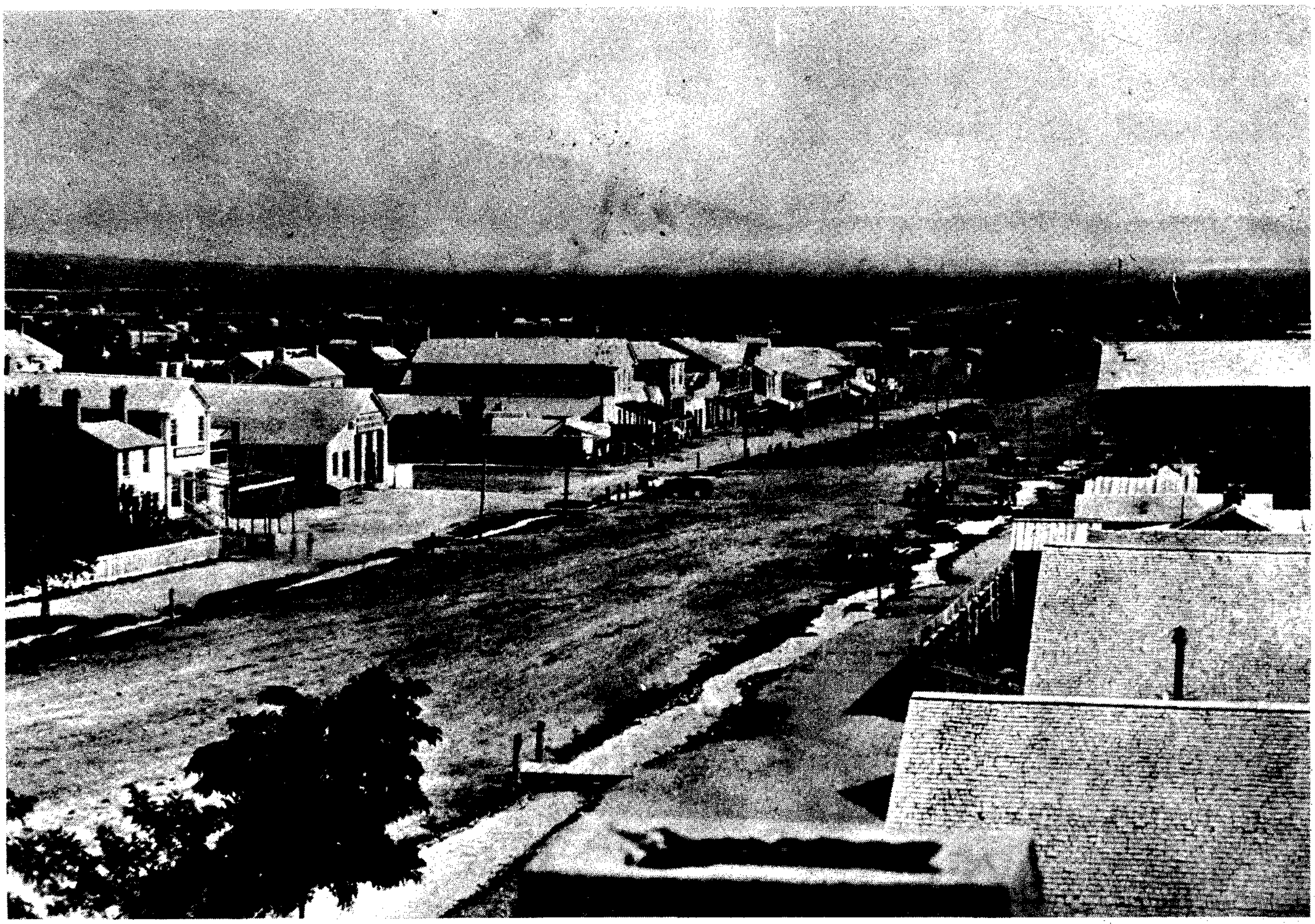
I had partly made up my mind to run in eggs, butter, and peaches as soon as they got ripe, by fast stages, and stationing my teams so as to carry passengers back and keep supplying Helena and Virginia City and all other mining camps. I had made a calculation that by investing my profits into more teams and wagons I could clear about $8,000 the coming year of 1868. My expenses for provisions and repairing was fearful high, and I had to take some medicines myself. I felt nervous and asthmatic and I had to take Hostetter's Stomach Bitters at $3 per bottle, and all we bought was two or three prices, but I could not help it. . . .

I heard that there would be a rush to the Sweetheart Mines as soon as the Spring opened up, and I had just the outfit to carry passengers and fast freight at good prices. . . .

ONE DAY a man with two ponies rode up to the tent, and I knew him. I had known him at Coffee Creek, Ore-

Old Theatre and City Hall on First Street in Salt Lake City.

N.H. Rose Collection



Utah State Historical Society

Main street of Salt Lake City in 1860s.

gon, Roseburg, Jacksonville, and at Walla Walla. His name was James Wilson. I was surprised to see him. He told me he had wintered four or five miles west of Stockton at a sawmill. He had heard I was at Stockton but had not seen me. He had been at Tooel(e) some, too. I asked him where he was going; he said to South Pass City—that he had been there last Fall and had taken up some claims and he wanted to get in as soon as possible. I asked him to stay overnight, which he did.

Next day I drove in my six horses on my coach, and he rode in with me. He left his ponies at my camp; one he had packed, and the other he rode. I looked about town, and saw the passengers, to see how soon to start, and engage more, and let them see my team and coach. It was on a Monday, and I made my arrangements to start on the following Monday (a week from then), and I went back to camp. Wilson left next dav with his two ponies; he carried a rifle and wore a coonskin cap.

Wednesday evening we had up our horses and salted them all, and then hobbled four of the largest leaders and kept Whitey or Pinto staked close to camp. I took my night glass, or field glass, and just dusk could see the thirteen head grazing off west towards the lake. We had been cautioned not to let our horses go on to some wheatfields north and east of us, where a German Mormon named H(i)skey lived. He was a fine old Pennsylvania farmer, and we got our milk and butter from him, and we were on good terms with him and all the Mormons close by, so we took pains to keep our horses from molesting them.

I considered they were all right and away from the wheatfield direction, so we went to bed, all quiet. Next morning early George or Sol went out for the horses while I was getting our breakfast. They should have taken the saddle horse staked close by, but they found he had pulled up his picket pin and rope and was gone, and they thought he had gone on to where the others would be, but found no trace or saw no horses.

So we all got breakfast and two of us struck out on foot. I found the tracks which led off South, and after going some four or five miles lost track of them, there were so many other tracks. . . . I saw cattle that I would take to be horses until I would get nearly to them before I would see that they were cattle, and I got off ten or twelve miles and it commenced to get dusk.

I found a cabin but no one in it, nor could I open it, and I was so tired that I could go no further so I laid down in a shed. I had no overcoat . . . and I had to pass a cold night, and I had a scant early breakfast. I was much troubled with my ankles; I would wrench them every little while; they seemed weak, and I suffered from them.

When it came daylight I took a look as far as I could see, and looked at the tracks, but there had been cattle and horses all over the country, and my eyes got weak and watery in looking long distances on the plains or prairies, and I struck for our camp, about twelve miles off. I was in hopes the other boys would find them while I was gone, but when I got to camp there was no sign or news of them.

Some of us thought that some of the Mormons had drove them into the hills so that they would not get on their wheatfields. The hills were seven or eight miles west and we thought they might have struck back to Silver Canyon, where we had wintered, and Sol Norton had gone back a ways. Some thought they had been stolen.

I got my breakfast, and I was nearly used up. I told George to go to where I had left off, and get out of the valley where all the cattle and stock tracks were, and strike a ridge beyond the valley, and he could examine the tracks, for our horses were all sharp new shod, and fourteen head would surely make a plain trail.

I went to the City to make inquiries, but could hear of none. I got back to camp at night and George had returned but no news of the horses; he had gone over the same ground I had gone over already, instead of going beyond the regular stock grazing part of the valley.

I BEGAN to get uneasy and thought they might have been stolen, and I wrote a letter to South Pass City to James Wilson to look out for my horses up there as my whole fourteen head were gone, and he would know my horses, as he had stopped in my tent at Brighton several days and saw all the horses. I told him to look for them and let me know at Salt Lake City. I addressed the letter to South Pass City, Wyoming

Territory.

We were all on foot and could not get horses to ride, for the farmers were all busy with their horses plowing, so we had hunted our stock afoot. It was tiresome, and we could not get far away to look, so I went to Salt Lake City to the livery stables to get horses to ride and hunt mine on, but they made all kinds of excuses, that they had no saddle horses, and did not like to let their driving horses go to hunt horses on, as they would be rode hard and fast; so I could get none.

Everybody had his opinions and advice to offer, that the Mormons had stolen them, and the Mormons said it might be that the notorious Bill Hickman and his brother George had stolen them and drove them into the mountains southwest of Salt Lake City, some twenty or thirty miles, and kept them hid there, as there were plenty gulches to hide them in, and a stranger would not find them in a year.

I went to the United States Judge in Salt Lake City, and he said I had better get a good hunter or mountaineer, who understood the country, and get him to hunt for me. I telegraphed west and north, and I found two young men, Mormons, who kept a general store in the City, named the Shaw Brothers, and I got two ponies to hire at $5 per day, and I had to promise to keep it secret, as the livery stable keepers would have prosecuted them for doing livery business without a license.

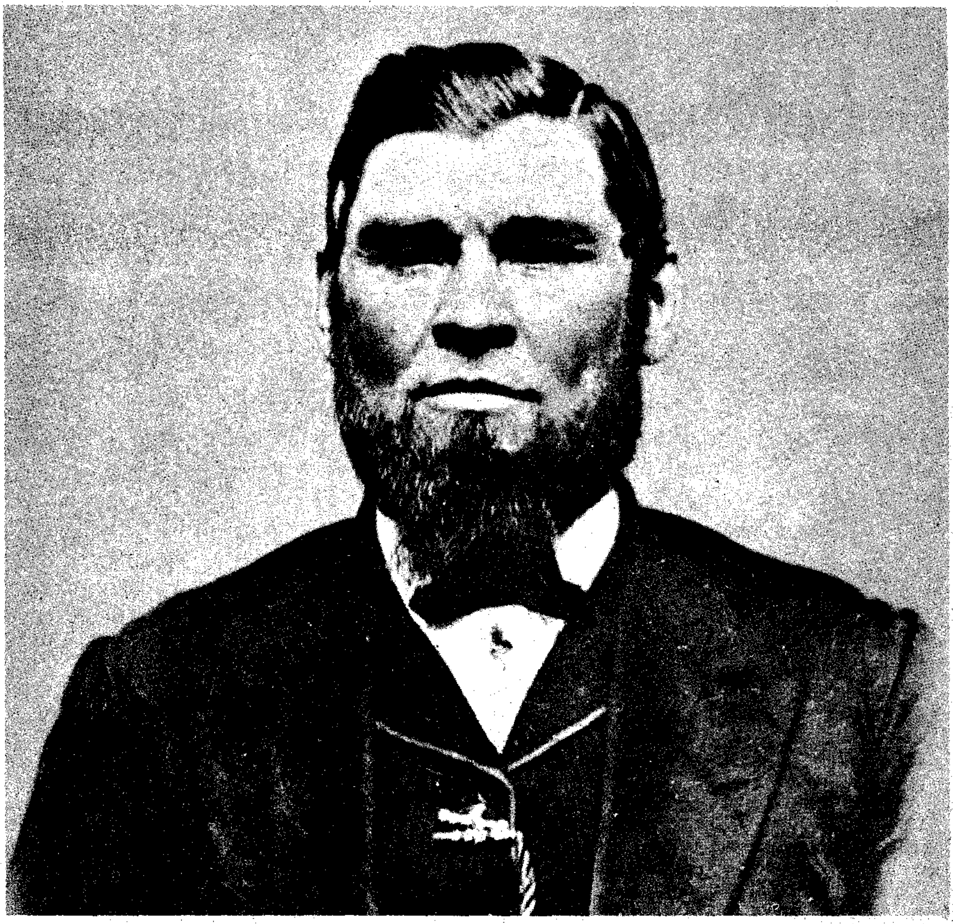
So I got George to take one horse, and Norton the other, and they took along blankets, and some provisions to last them two days and nights. I kept making inquiries in town of all those passing through the City. I went to see Brigham Young, and he could only refer me to a stockman who had a big stock ranch about 180 miles west, at Point of Rock, close to Nevada. On that road he had herders herding his stock, and if the horses were stolen and drove west they might see or hear of them, for seven or eight were large American work horses about 16 hands high. I went to see the man.

He was the famous or infamous, Porter C. Rockwell of the Destroying Angels; he was their leader when they massacred the immigrants in the Mountain Meadows in 1857. He made me a fair offer, better than any Gentile or white man in Salt Lake City. He said he would take one of his horses, let me have one, and we could put a pack of blankets and provisions on the third, and he would go with me to his place at the Point of Rock, 180 miles, and hunt all the way there, and then get his herders to start from there to hunt my horses.

He would be out all expense and if we got the horses I was to let him have a choice of two horses for his trouble. He seemed to act perfectly square and like a liberal gentleman, (if he was a Mormon). I was to let him know in a few days if I should conclude to take his offer, so as to prepare for our trip.

I had about run out of money in fitting out my teams and my expense had been high, and the passengers that I had engaged began to feel that I would not be able to go, for I had not heard of the horses.

After being out two days George came in. He had heard of some horses being seen at Bingham Canyon, a new discovery about twenty-seven or thirty miles in the west mountains, and he had gone over there and found some horses, but not mine. Sol Norton came in, and he had heard of nothing.



Herman Francis Reinhart

—*Frontispiece from The Golden Frontier*

WHILE WE were getting supper, a man with a load of hay on his wagon came up to camp, and George Woodbury said he was Brigham H. Young, the nephew of old Brigham Young, and George knew him. George had been in Salt Lake City a year before, and had got acquainted with him (he, George, was a distant relation of Brigham H. Young on his mother's side). George spoke to Mr. Young, and asked him to stay all night with us, as it was still four miles to the city and getting dusk. So he stayed with us, and as we had supper about ready, he eat with us.

After supper George told me to tell Brigham H. Young how I was situated—my horses all stolen and I was about out of money to hunt them with (I had only some seven or eight dollars of gold specimens left). We told him about the livery men not letting us have any horses to hunt ours with, and one of us had to stay and watch camp while the others hunted the horses.

He told me I could have my coach and two wagons hauled to his barnyard in town, and we could put our seven sets of harness in his granary, and he had a small house close by the barn with a stove in it where we could cook and stay, and he would loan me $50 on one of my wagons. If I got back my horses I could pay him back; if not, he would pay me the balance of the wagon, $100 more, and keep it, and I might then dispose of my harness, coach, and other wagon. and any provisions I needed I could get from him, such as flour, meat, vegetables, potatoes, butter, milk, eggs, and I could settle when I got ready to leave.

Now I was surprised at his splendid offer right in time of need, and I was awful thankful, and next day moved all my things into the city to his place, and found everything just to suit me, and we got our meals in the little house. I sent George Woodbury out again and Norton in another direction. I got the $50 from Mr. Brigham H. Young, and let George and Norton have some money along to pay their expenses while out.

Mr. Young had two wives and families in separate houses, all well fixed. His first wife was a fine lady. They were all from Massachusetts. He had a daughter, a fine player on the piano, and their house was furnished all first class, and his children well raised. They lived in houses one on each side of our little house; each one had a fine house, and a quarter block of a lot to their houses, all in good style.

Now I felt quite bad to be here at Salt Lake City with but seven sets of harness and my coach and wagons, and no money to buy horses with, and if I should have to sell, all I had left would not have brought over $700. I was owing George about $80 or $90 and I was under obligation to take George and Norton to South Pass City anyhow, but here I was, after being away from home eighteen years, not heard of any of my relatives for fourteen years, had spent the best part of my life roughing it, and taking all kinds of risks of my life, and after having got property to the amount of about $2,500, to lose it all at once, when I had the prospect of making from $5,000 to $8,000 the coming year—it was discouraging.

I felt very revengeful toward who

must have stolen my horses, and it seemed as if I could kill them on sight. I had come to the conclusion to sell the harnesses, coach, and other wagon, pay George off, and get both a passage to South Pass City Mines, take what money I would have left, buy me a horse to ride, and make it the one thing to do to find the man or men that stole my horses and no matter how long, or how far I would have to go, to get them and kill them, if I had to hang for it. I felt desperate.

I found that there had been more stock lost or stolen; mules belonging to a Mormon bishop, and he came to see me and got a description of my horses, and he gave me a description of his mules, and while we were all hunting we might come acrost one another's stock, and we would make a more thorough hunt for it; he had telegraphed all around, too.

ONE EVENING George Woodbury got back from the hunt and said he came acrost a man and his son who had moved some sheep and some young cattle from the valley west some twenty-five miles and he went along a track with the sheep and cattle in the evening, and next morning came back a horseback over the same road, and saw that during the night a lot of fresh shod horses had been drove over the trail after his sheep had passed along and said it was some twelve miles from our camp, and it was on Wednesday night, he thought two weeks ago, and George went to where the man and boy said, and saw the horse tracks quite plain yet. He was positive they were my horses' tracks, but being as it was nearly two weeks ago, thought no use to go after them until he let me know about it, for by that time they would no doubt be 200 or 300 miles away.

Now where George saw the fresh shod tracks was on a straight line to the hills or ridge from our camp, and the first night I was out I had been tired and hungry, I told George to go acrost the place I had been and strike to the high land beyond, where the stock had their regular grazing grounds, and to go acrost that to the rise of the ridge, and had he done so, he would have got on the track that very day, not over four miles from where I slept under the shed. After that we could have kept on and got to the horses in two or three days. So by a fatal neglect to take my advice we had lost the horses.

Sunday morning we had laid off our route for Monday, and I was going to telegraph south towards New Mexico, or Parranegut, a mining camp near a Mormon settlement at or beyond St. George. After breakfast I went around to a livery stable and as I walked along a man said the Chief of Police of Salt Lake City was looking for me, and I walked up towards the police office and met the Mormon Bishop who had lost the mules and had a description of my horses, coming towards me with another gentleman.

He introduced me to him, and asked how many horses I had lost; I told him fourteen head, and the Chief of Police told me he had got a dispatch that morning from the Sheriff of Fillmore City, 160 miles south, that they had arrested two men on suspicion, with a lot of stolen horses, fourteen head in all. I asked him if they had the names of the men, and he said one's name was Jackson and one Anderson, but they looked like father and son. I asked if we could send a message right down to the sheriff, but Burd said not til evening when they could call the roll, as all the employes would be off, as it was Sunday, and for me to come around in the evening and we could send some messages.

After a little, the Sheriff of Salt Lake City, named Burton, came to me to see about getting the horses, and he saw Burd, the Chief of Police, but he did not give him any satisfaction. The Sheriff did not like it because the Sheriff at Fillmore did not telegraph to him (so that he could get his fingers in the pie on the horses). Burton was a bad man, and all the Gentiles hated him. He was head of the Destroying Angels after Porter C. Rockwell was out of that office.

I went around to the Police office and we asked the names of the men held in custody at Fillmore, and they said Jackson and Anderson, and one claimed to be my partner, and that he had a wife and family at Tooel(e), that he was a Mormon. I told them it could not be, for I knew no one at Tooel(e), a Mormon, but we telegraphed back to hold the two prisoners until we would come, and to take good care of the stock. The Chief of Police said he would send his deputy chief, named Calder, with me, and go Monday morning on the 9 o'clock stage, and we would get to Fillmore on Tuesday or Wednesday. I got two saddles to take along for us to ride. George Woodbury and Sol Norton and Brigham H. Young were glad to hear the good news.

NOW I will go back a few days to show how near a person can come to finding things out and not do so. One evening while I was still camped at Brighton, I had been in town and stopped at a house on a creek not far from town, between the River Jordan; there was a man and his wife, and I asked if they had seen or heard of any stray or lost horses, and they said not. They asked on what night I had lost them; I told them Wednesday, and the old woman said someone had stolen a long stake rope off of one of their horses and they had tracked the person with two ponies off toward our camp at Brighton, and they thought they knew who got their rope, that a man with two ponies, riding one and leading the other, had camped on Tuesday close by their house. He had gone to town and came back, where he had left one of his horses, with another young man, and camped.

The oldest man who had come first had a Mississippi Rifle (or Yorger by some called), and he had on a fur cap, and his front teeth were out, and called himself Jackson. The other, a young man of about nineteen or twenty, said his name was Anderson, but the old folks thought he was the son of the old one. They said they were going to South Pass City, to the Sweetwater Mines, and started next morning towards Salt Lake City together, and that night the rope was stolen off of their horse, and the man had tracked them towards Brighton, and saw two pony tracks going that way.

Now when I got the dispatch from Fillmore, and the names, I began to see that they were the parties who had stolen the stake rope, and then rode over to where our tent was and pulled up the picket pin and led off Pinto, and then took the hobbles off of the four American horses and all started South with them. But so much stock running at large had tramped out their horseshoe signs, and I lost them and came back. If I had been on horseback no doubt I would have gone on, clear of the stock range, and would have struck their track on the ridges beyond.

So Monday, April 28, the Deputy Chief of Police Calder and myself took the stage. On the 29th had breakfast at Chicken Creek and dinner at Round Valley. While the men were changing horses I asked the new driver if he had seen the men who they had in custody at Fillmore, and he said yes, that the old one was a hard case, and claimed to be a Mormon family from Tooel(e), named Anderson.

I asked him to give me a description of him, and he said he was tall, slim, and lost his front teeth, had an old Yorger, and wore a fur cap. As soon as he said "fur cap," I all at once knew it must be Wilson, who had left us at Brighton on Tuesday morning for South Pass City!

Now I could account for the two men at the old man's house where they had taken his picket rope. I was dumbfounded to think that after knowing Wilson some eight or nine years, and letting him stay in our tent and eat with us he would do so mean a trick on me, taking every horse, and leaving me worse than afoot, when he had two ponies and provisions to take him to the mines. It was inexcusable.

We got to Fillmore about 11 o'clock A.M. and drove up to the hotel kept by McBride, where both prisoners were kept. The horses were in a lot back of

Ft. Douglas, 1860s

the hotel. There was quite a crowd at the hotel and the Sheriff had the two men in charge upstairs. . . . the hotel-keeper McBride showed me the horses, but the two Chapman roan horses were not among them; twelve of mine and the two ponies were all there was.

I WENT upstairs with the Police Chief and saw James Wilson with handcuffs on his wrists. He was very much ashamed of himself, or pretended that he was when he saw me. I asked him how I had ever misused him that he should serve me such a mean trick. He said he was awful sorry that he had done so, but he did not know what came over him; at first he was jealous because I had so many nice big horses and such a fine outfit and he had but the two ponies, and he thought if he could run off seven or eight of the best and take them down to New Mexico he would make quite a raise and I could soon make up my loss again.

The other young fellow (he said) had persuaded him to take them all and they would be more likely to get away with them, for if they left me any I would be apt to follow on and I would be more likely to overhaul them, but by taking all the horses we would be left afoot and not have the means at hand to track and follow them. He laid the blame mostly on Anderson, and he begged me to give him a chance to repay me my loss, and I might take the two ponies to pay part of my expenses so far.

At first I felt like taking my pistol and blowing Wilson's brains out on the spot, but after considering that I had got nearly all my horses back again, by the merest chance in the world, I then got a more forgiving mood on me, and he was in the hands of the Sheriff, and I would not be justified in killing him, by law. So I got calm and cool and asked him what he had done to the two bobtail roan horses, the Chapman roans; he said they had drove on Thursday night after they started, all night, and in the dark had lost them two and did not discover their loss till daylight.

By then they were afraid to go back to where they must have lost them, for fear we might be close behind them or we would catch up that much while they were hunting the two lost, so went on without them. I did not believe him, and still thought they were in with a gang of horse thieves who had the two roans, and the mules lost, and other stock missing in the valley, but he assured me it was the truth.

Mr. McBride and the herder then told us how they came to arrest the two prisoners on suspicion of having stolen the horses, and Wilson helped explain how he got where he did.

They were compelled to strike in for the settlements to get some provisions and when they got close to Fillmore they had the horses in a canyon out of sight that day, intending to go into Fillmore that night . . . but a herder that was out looking for some stray stock saw the fresh horse tracks, and saw they were going South, contrary to all the travel at this time, which was all going North toward Salt Lake City.

He rather thought it strange, and saw the horses hid in a gulch, and the men, one riding a pack saddle and the other a riding saddle, keeping the stock out of sight. He came into Fillmore and told McBride and the Sheriff and a lot more men around town, and they concluded to go out and look at the men and the horses. So they got the herder to get up their own horses close to town, but the herder could only find two or three of them, and the sheriff's horse was not among them.

So he and most all the others got out of the notion to go, but McBride and the herder and a cowboy had their horses and said they would go, just for the fun of a little ride. The others tried to persuade them not to go, that they might be some cattlemen from New Mexico on their way home from Montana or Idaho, but the landlord of the hotel, McBride, told the two others to come, and away they went.

When they got to the place where the herder had seen them last, they were not there. They had moved on, and the three men followed the tracks a short distance and lost it, and all rode ahead a while, but no signs, and they were just about to turn back when one of them saw a fresh cud of tobacco on the rocky road or gravel, and saw some tobacco spit along the ground, and they just kept on a short distance and struck the fresh track, and directly saw the horses in a gulch and the men had camped. McBride rode up and spoke to Wilson and asked him where he was going. He said to New Mexico, but he was waiting for his partner whom he had left at Salt Lake City with more stock. The other young man was up the gulch with the horses, so McBride told the two men to stay with Wilson and he rode up to Anderson and asked him the questions he had just asked of Wilson, and he told a different story about it.

So McBride asked the young man to come down to where Wilson and the others were, and when he got there he sent the herder to drive down all the horses, and they packed up and brought them all down to Fillmore City. The crowd got around to asking them questions, and Wilson got to telling too many stories, and the men saw that he was the head, or leader, and put a rope around his neck and pulled him up to a tree, and he just confessed all about it, and told them the horses belonged to Herman F. Reinhart, and how they had stolen them.

THIS WAS on a Saturday evening, and the Sheriff just telegraphed to the Chief of Police in Salt Lake City on Sunday morning. That night they both tried to bribe the guard to let them go, offering them four of the best horses, and they had made offers to McBride when he first brought them in, but McBride was an old thief-catcher and Fillmore was a regular thief-catching place, nearly out of the Salt Lake Settlement. Most of the men belonged to the Vigilantes, and at Salt Lake City they told me if I had just said it, they would have hung them for me in a short time. But Wilson let on and claimed to be a Mormon and that he had a wife and four children at Tooel(e), and the Mormon women at Fillmore City sympathized with him in his troubles. Calder told me if they had known he was a Gentile they would like to have helped hang him.

We got out our saddles and saddled up two of the best for Calder and me to ride, and put the other two saddles, one a packsaddle, on two not so fast for the two prisoners. We took off their handcuffs and made one go ahead and the other to drive the horses. We bid the folks at Fillmore goodbye and started about two o'clock back for Salt Lake City.

The prisoners complained of getting sore (one was riding a pack saddle), and we made them take turns riding it. We made them do the driving of the horses, and we followed on behind; sometimes we would be back over a half a mile, but they were afraid, for we always kept the fastest horses, and if they had made a break to escape we could have soon overhauled them, and we could have called on all the Mormon help we wanted, and Wilson knew it.

Calder told me if I really felt like killing Wilson I could easy do so, and I would not be molested by the authorities; all I would have to do would be to let Wilson get a start, and say he was trying to escape, and I could fill his body full of holes, for I had two large revolvers with me, and so did Calder. But I felt I could nearly forgive Wilson for his thieving, for I was so thankful to get back the most of (the) horses, which I had all but given up as lost forever, and I knew Wilson would be convicted and go to the penitentiary for ten or fifteen years, and that would be punishment for him anyway.

He kept asking and begging us to have it made as easy for him as possible, and he would some time replace all my loss when he would get free again, and he acted very sorry all the time on the road.

There was to be a big Mormon conference held . . . and all the big high church officials and dignitaries would be at Provo . . . and within twenty miles of Provo we met a fine carriage and two or three persons inside. When they got up near us, Calder saluted the gentleman in the carriage, and he told me it was President Brigham Young. He motioned for Calder to come to the carriage, and they spoke a while, and Calder told him about the finding of my horses, and there were the thieves. Brigham Young said they deserved hanging, and they bid us good evening and drove on.

When we got into Salt Lake City, we took the two prisoners to the police station and they took them to a jail for safekeeping. I took the horses to Brigham H. Young's place, where our boys were, and they were awful glad to see the horses again.

BURTON, the Sheriff, came to see me, and talked like I ought to pay all expenses and trouble, he thought about $300, but the Chief of Police Burd and Deputy Calder said to not mind what Burton the Sheriff said, that Judge Smith had told him to tell me to come to his residence to dinner next day. I done so, and he said he was glad I had got the horses back, as I must be prejudiced against living with the Mormons, but I must overlook it, they could not help it, and if the thieves had been Mormons they should have punished them severely right off, in fact, he thought they would have been hung.

But as it was, they were both Gentiles they should have a fair trial, as there had been ill feeling between the Mormons and the Government in regards to the assassination of Dr. Robinson. So the Mormons did not wish to displease our Government officers, who had said General Connor would hold President Brigham Young responsible in the future. He invited me to dinner and he told me he was sorry that I had lost so much time and money in the stealing of my horses, but that I should not pay one cent of the expense the authorities had been to, that it was their place to get back my property after being taken in hand at Fillmore by the Sheriff there, and he hoped I would not have any hard unpleasant feeling against the welfare of Salt Lake City or Utah, and hoped I would return again and winter my stock, and not have them stolen again.

I told him about Burton, the Sheriff. and he told me that was all a get-up of Burton's, and for me to pay him nothing. I told him that Wilson, the thief, had offered me the two ponies to pay part of my expenses, but I would turn them over to the Chief of Police and the city authorities could do with them as they pleased. So I left Judge Smith, one of the Mighty Three, with a favorable impression, and of the Mormons in general.

Now all my passengers that I had engaged for my coach and wagons for South Pass City, Sweetwater Mines, had all gone some two weeks. I had a big expense and borrowed money to raise to pay Brigham H. Young his money, and for provisions, and for the two ponies I hired from the Shaw Brothers. I could not get many passengers or freight for South Pass, so concluded to sell one of the wagons and some harness and the big tent, so as to pay up my debts and get money to fit up for a trip as soon as possible. I sold the wagon to Shaw Brothers for $110, the tent and harness for $55, to some party in the city. . . .

I got what horses need shoeing shod up again, and on the 11th day of May, 1868, a man came to me from the Bishop, where we had stayed all night on our way up from Fillmore. He had got his herder to look for my two roan horses that Wilson had lost, and he found them not far from where they had been lost, and they were fat and in splendid order. He brought them to me and I paid him the $25 reward I had offered the Bishop to find them. I could have sold them right off for $350, but I did not want to part with them yet. They had been undisturbed for over three weeks and on good grass, and they felt and looked well.

So I got all ready to go to South Pass City, paid up all my bills, and gave Brigham H. Young $10 more than he asked me; he had made his bill so very moderate. I had my stage fare to Fillmore to pay, and all my expenses, but I found five passengers for the coach, at $118; and some baggage at some $10; and 2,000 pounds of flour in the wagon as freight to South Pass City, at $120, so in all it came to $248. . . .

So I bid all my Salt Lake City friends goodbye, and left on the 15th of May, 1868.

When Booger Red Rode The Man-Killer Grey

(Continued from page 55)

he fell. A horse-drawn ambulance took him to the hospital. The horse was caught and taken back to the corrals. The show went on. By eleven o'clock the rider was dead.

During the morning the reputation of the grey horse spread—and grew—among the spectators milling around the arena. It was said that no man had been able to ride him to a standstill, that he had thrown them all, that this was the twenty-third man he had killed. Perhaps no man had yet ridden him to a finish. Even if this was only the first man he had killed, he was a terrible horse.

Among the riders present was Booger Red. He was approaching the peak of his riding career, though he was to be much more widely known in years to follow. Certain men now approached him and asked him if he would ride the grey that afternoon. He said he would if they would make a purse for him. A little before twelve o'clock four men on gentle horses started riding among the people with big Stetson hats held out for contributions. Dimes, quarters, half-dollars and silver dollars—for dollar bills were then unknown—were pitched into the hats from all sides until between two and three gallons of silver had been collected.

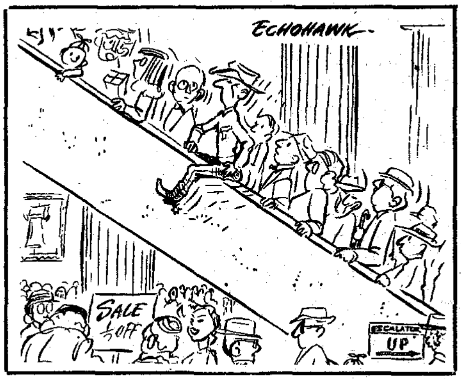
Whatever the amount was, Booger Red earned it that afternoon. He mounted the grey near the corral. As soon as he was turned loose, the "man-killer," as he was now being called, started out in the one-jump-forward and then zigzag-lunging style that had brought him victory a few hours before. After he had gone forward about a hundred yards in this way, he changed his style and went to fence-rowing. After the one-jump-forward, he would make a twisting turn first to the left and then to the right, bringing the side of his body within the turn so close to the ground that had Booger Red loosened his leg grip his foot could have almost touched the earth. Booger Red did not loosen anything.

When the grey started fence-rowing, he was headed east. After a jump in that direction, he would pitch crossways, headed north, and then twist back to the east and the next time pitch crossways to the south. He kept this up until he had pitched around and over maybe ten acres of land, covering half of it twice.

The crowd, people afoot as well as in buggies and on horses, followed the pitching horse, keeping back far enough not to interfere. He did not seem to notice them. All his attention was on the man cemented to his back and quirting him at every jump so as to keep in rhythm with his motions.

After pitching all over those acres of ground and halfway over them again, the grey made one last lunge and then set out on a beeline run for the corral. "I was standing near the gate," Joseph J. Good says, "when the horse, of his own accord, stopped right at it. Two men seized his ears, bridle and headstall and held him while Booger Red dismounted. He was so exhausted that he had to lean against the fence in order to stand up.

"The horse was totally blind. He had pitched himself blind. He was led away, and I never heard what became of him. The worst pitching horse I ever saw and the best rider I ever saw were together that afternoon at the Fort Worth Stock Show. I doubt if Booger Red ever rode a worse horse than the dappled grey man-killer."



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Why Another Horse Magazine?

(Continued from page 1)

out our regular publications.

For a number of reasons (including the fact that we are lazy scalawags!) we test the old water by rounding up stories from our earliest and now unavailable issues and reprinting them in packages of 100% whatever-the-subject-is-to-be.

Our first special interest magazine was GOLD! published in 1969. It had nothing in it but treasure stories, and it went over fine. Next to come up was BADMAN. Naturally, every story in it had to do with the outlaw angle of the frontier. It seems to be doing okay and we are sort of propping up a shaky confidence in the fact that there are enough people who will buy such specialized magazines on the newsstands to make them successful.

This latest one, HORSE TALES, is strictly for you readers who love horseflesh. As I have said before, it is not a technical magazine because there are so many of this type already on the market. Like our specialized magazines mentioned above, we have gathered together stories printed in the early issues of TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES and put them all in one package. If you don't like it, there will be no harm done other than we'll be eating cornbread and clabber a whole lot more often and the kids will have a few holes in their drawers—but this won't be anything new around here!

Before I forget it, I sure want to say that we do not round up these old stories because it is *less expensive*. We pay the authors the same price for reprinting these stories that we did in the beginning. Most of you will not have read any (or at least, only a *very* few) of these and this is the fast way of finding out whether or not you want such a magazine. And if you do, remember that this magazine will not be restricted to any period or type—everything goes! Rodeo horses, racing, frontier, farm nags if there is a terrific story, just plain riding horses—anything in the horse field.

WOULDN'T it be fun to round up stories like this one from England? Phillip Davies, of Farnham, England, has a horse called Roger. Now old Roger has a sense of humor, undoubtedly, because he likes to play dead and it is causing his owner all sorts of problems. Roger lies on his back with his legs in the air, closes his eyes and opens his mouth. Many of those who pass by and see Roger in this condition are convinced he's dying and call Phillip and the police.

Phillip is now thinking of putting a note on the gate to the effect that "this horse is not dead." The owner says, "It gets very tiresome explaining to all the callers."

Now let's jump to Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Australia. Mr. A. Steve St. Clair sent the picture on page one to me, saying that he had one dickens of a time getting copies of FRONTIER TIMES on the newsstands over there but just found one and thought he'd send in this picture. Alice Springs is in the Outback of Australia and a *must* for me if I can ever get over to that country. Mr. St. Clair's letter is tremendously interesting and I wish I had space here to run all of it but I am writing him for more details on horses as a whole in this isolated part of the world and will run it later—if our magazine colt grows up.

Mr. St. Clair writes: "Enclosed is a photo which was featured in a book *West of the Bland* (New South Wales) which quotes 'One of the most extraordinary racing accidents ever to occur and one that had world-wide interest at the time was the death of Borree Jack on the West Wyalong Race Course on October 2, 1909. Borre Jack, owned by Mr. David Weir, ran into the end post of the fence on the inner side of the track at a race meeting. The fence rail, a sapling 14 feet in length and 3 inches in diameter, entered his body inside the point of the shoulder, passed through his body and protruded fully three feet through the rump. As the beautiful horse rose to his feet and swayed around before falling dead, the crowd was spellbound with horror and pity.' "

Perhaps a story and photo like this shouldn't be run in a magazine for lovers of horses. However, a little bad with the good, sad with the glad—that seems to have been a part of life since the world began.

By the way, Mr. St. Clair loves anything western, horse magazines, etc., and I'll bet he would really appreciate your sending him copies of any magazines of this nature that you might have. His address is Box 124, Alice Springs 5750, Northern Territory, Australia.

They don't call me "windy" for nothing! So I'll just say one more thing and stop. I signed one of my editorials "Hosstail" over ten years ago and that's my name now to readers all over the world. My middle name is "Austell" which I understand is an Australian name (?). I am sure there is no reflection upon my unblemished character (wow!) because of the fact that now just about 100% of our readers call me "Hosstail."

See you later, I hope.—Joe "Hosstail" Small.

Bob Tales

(Continued from page 54)

HANDLING THE RIATA

BY BURL TUTTLE

SIX STRANDS of tightly plaited steerhide, seventy feet long, coiled neatly at the saddle-horn—that's a *riata*. Invaluable tool of the cowboy and *vaquero*, it is used mostly in Southern Arizona and in Old Mexico. Its proper preparation requires patient hours of cutting, scraping, stretching, and weaving. In the hands of an expert like old Jingle-Bob Jones, a veteran of the Arizona ranges, the *riata* leaps to life.

"Lots o' cowhands won't use one of these here rawhide ropes," Jingle-Bob told me. "Me—I find 'em best for every day work."

The old cowboy was silent while he produced Bull Durham and papers and rolled himself a cigarette. I waited.

"First off," went on Jingle-Bob, " 'twas the Mexican *vaquero* that started ropin' with the *riata*. Far away from stores where he could git grass ropes, he made his own.

"Fellers that use the *riata* have to dally—that is, take turns around the saddle-horn to hold a critter. You see, rawhide will stand an awful pull if you kin let her slip a little, but any quick hard jerk will bust a strand or mebbe the whole rope. Learnin' to dally is an art, jest like paintin' or playin' the piano. Mostly though, no matter how clever he is, a puncher loses a finger or two afore he gits on to the hang of it. A rawhide rope a-slippin' on the horn can cut off a hand neater than a sawbones with a knife. I've seen it happen a-plenty times.

"One of the best hands at dallyin' I ever seen was a wall-eyed feller who run a small outfit down near the border. It was a purty sight to see him, a-ridin' off a hillside, his hoss a-jumpin' rocks and boulders hot after some renegade brute, his *riata* a-singin' like a harp string. Just when you'd think the critter was gittin' away, *whango* would go the rawhide forty feet through the air and settle neat on the steer's horns. Afore you could say 'Looky there!' this walleyed feller would have the slack pulled up and two-three turns around the horn. Smoke would just boil up from where the turns was slippin' around the leather-covered pommel, but afore the critter pulled to the end, he'd be stopped.

"This here cowpoke prided hisself on not jerkin' cattle around, no matter how wild they was. That's an art too, for a hoss runnin' agin a cow-brute goin' a little faster, can tumble the beast mighty easy. You gotta know how and when to handle the rawhide for that kind of business. For one thing, a feller has to be careful his hoss don't step on the *riata* and fray a strand, causin' it to bust just when he needs it most. Sometimes the only thing holdin' a wild bull off from you and your hoss is that thin rawhide. A frayed strand can mean quick death to hoss and puncher in a spot like that. I've seen it happen, too.

"RIATAS are a heap better in the corral, too, a ropin' hosses and mares. A feller with a tied rope in a corral is in worse shape than havin' a sack-full o' bear cubs dropped on his head."

Old Jingle-Bob shifted his back against the sun-baked adobe walls of the bunkhouse, squinted across the expanse of range-land toward the distant mountains, and continued.

"I remember one time up on the Rio Puerco when a feller rode into the corral with a short hardtwist rope, tied fast, and afore anybody could stop him, he necked a big stud cold. The wreck began right there.

"The colt pulled back till the feller's saddle was up on his hoss' neck. The whole damn bunch spooked and run by the cowboy. The roped colt rim-fired another rider in the corral and jerked the first rider down, hoss and all. The rim-fired hoss bucked into the bunch of broncs and throwed his rider. Them broncs run up and down, with him a-layin' there till I thought he'd get killed for sure.

"The feller that started all the ruckus laid under his hoss knocked plumb cold. The hoss couldn't git up, for the colt was chokin' hisself down still tryin' to pull

(Continued on page 72)

SECOND SADDLE

The following are letters which came in after these articles first ran in our old magazines. We are adding them for your information. The writers' addresses are probably no longer valid.

Comanche Lives On!

Dear Sir:

I was disturbed by the Winter *Frontier Times* short by Nono Minor entitled, "The Horse That Survived The Custer Massacre."

It stated, "The hide of Comanche deteriorated to the point where it had to be destroyed."

I personally knew Professer Lewis Lindsey Dyche of the Museum of Natural History at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas. As I worked in the museum for ten or twelve years in the Paleontology Department under my dad, I am quite familiar with the surroundings.

I saw the mounted horse Comanche about every day, as it was on display in the entrance lobby of the museum and is now in a glass case appropriately labeled. Why is it that you published in your magazine that his hide was destroyed? This should be corrected as a historical fact.—W. Harry Martin, Box 275, Stamps, Arkansas.

Defenseless as a knight without his "typographical error" shield, and unable to erase, strike over, or just plain burn the mistake, we'd better admit it. How this one got by our checkers, we'll never know.

Upon our request, Mr. E. Raymond Hall, Director of the University of Kansas Museum of Natural History, confirmed the existence of Comanche by sending a color photograph taken two years ago. He states, "When one considers that the horse was mounted more than sixty-five years ago, he is in remarkably good condition today. The mail almost every day brings an inquiry of one sort or another concerning Comanche. Some of these inquiries are from Army historians. A large number of inquiries are from boys and girls from the ages of five to fifteen; inquiries from girls outnumber those from boys, five to one."

Kickapoo Horse Race

How-ko-la, Mr. Callahan, my friend:

I read your story of Kickapoo horse race in old issue of *True West*. I remember long time ago horse races—I never forget. I see many ponies, sometime fifty in one race. Indians long time never use saddle or bridle. They ride horse bareback and put all kind of things on horse's legs and neck. Many paint symbols on pony to bring good luck. Long time my chief tell many stories about racing and how Indians jump from back to back on different ponies—some hang on tail, some hold horse's neck.

Now people say Tatzumbie get old but like big army man, Tatzumbie never die, she only fade into sky. Some day all Indians come back to earth because earth our mother and the sun our father.—Tatzumbie Du Pea, 1630 W. 12th Street, Los Angeles 15, California.

We are indebted to Mrs. Jerry Salisbury, 3915 South Howard Boulevard, Los Angeles, for the following newspaper clipping and photo of Dave Whyte.

"Dave Lee White, 62, a topnotch rodeo performer who later played in motion pictures, died December 4 (1956) of pneumonia in a Los Angeles hospital.

"He was born January 18, 1894, near Big Horn and attended Meade Creek and Big Horn schools. At an early age he began a career of bronc riding and at 17 joined Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show.

"White won his first riding championship at Sheridan, then added top laurels at Frontier Days in Cheyenne and other major rodeos, including Tulsa, Lewiston, and Pendleton. His greatest triumph was the bronc riding championship at Madison Square Garden, New York City, in 1923.

"In 1924 he joined Tex Austen's show, going abroad where they performed in London for the king and queen, in Paris, and other cities.

Champion Dave Whyte in action.

"Returning home, he became interested in motion pictures and played important roles in many Western films such as *The Plainsman, Custer's Last Stand, The Arizonian, When A Man's A Man,* etc. A number of years ago, while working for Will Rogers, Jr., White sustained a broken hip from which he never recovered.

"Surviving are two brothers: James M. White, Vienna, Va.; Charles White, Sheridan, Wyoming; a sister, Mrs. Bill Potts, Buffalo, Wyoming; and a number of nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. J. White, early day residents of Wyoming, and three sisters."

Booger Red's Grey Wolf

Was reading a back issue of *True West* and ran across the article on Booger Red by J. Frank Dobie.

Booger and my pa were old cronies and got off some high lonesomes together. In the early 1900's, he and pa took me to a wagon yard in north Texas to see a bull elk that was penned in a box stall. Then they decided to have a drink before going to the camp grounds. Those two crazy ranahans took me into a saloon with them and the bartender fairly threw us out. He screamed, "Get that child out of here, you crazy galoots!"

We walked back over to the wagon yard and, while I had another look at the elk, Booger slipped into the saloon alone and got a pint. I admired the elk and they sipped on the bottle.

It wasn't to last long though, for the sheriff appeared with snake venom in his eye. The bartender told him that I might be a kidnap victim and the sheriff had to take me to ma before he'd let Booger and pa go.

I'll never forget it. Pa and Booger were fairly dragging their heels, and I was in tow by the sheriff who was pushing us all. Mama was mad as an old wet turkey hen but to me it was high adventure!

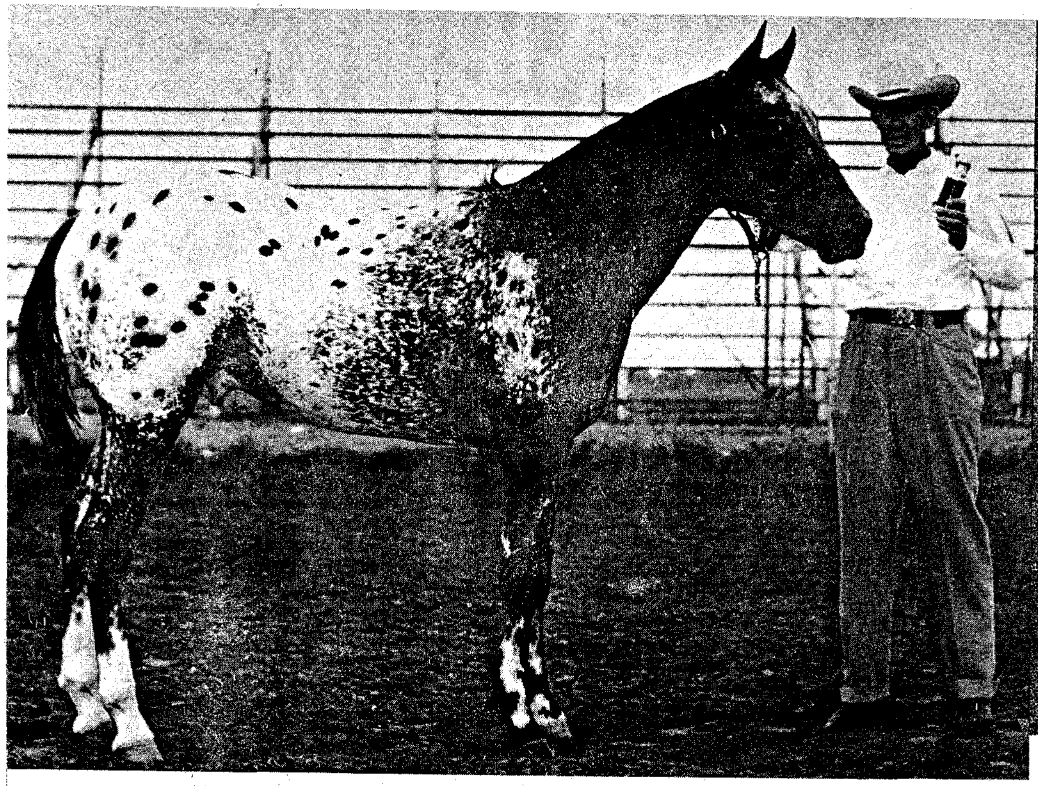
The nickname was tacked on Booger as a young boy when a black powder charge blew up in his face, scarring it badly. His spiel in later years at his bronc show was "Booger Red, the ugliest man alive or dead! If you say I'm not, I'll fight you till daylight in the morning."

He had a standing offer of $50.00 to any man who could ride a gelding called Grey Wolf. It was many years and many cowboys bit the dust before he was ever ridden. The Privett wagons would come to town and the call would go out for all the hard horses to be brought in—anyone with a bronc to ride got a free pass.

We had a bald-faced, stocking legged sorrel that was a good work horse but was spoiled to ride. I sneaked off and rode to town one night to tell Booger about him. He said he'd send one of his riders after him. Slim, redheaded Luther was the man he sent. Luther was tall and quiet and very sure of himself—every inch a man though still in his early teens.

That was a ride to remember with Luther spurring neck and cantle and the golden gelding lunging high and wide—bawling every time his hoofs hit the ground.

The last time I saw Booger, I was on the bronc circuit myself and heard he was camped in a little West Texas town. I rode out to see him and I'll never forget how he looked. Booger Red, the ugliest man alive or dead, was thin and old, hunkered on worn boot heels and whittling. Several ponies were tied to the wagon wheel. Among them was a bony and bowed Grey Wolf. Like his master, he was indestructible and unbroken.—R. Wayne Findley, 817 N. Jefferson, Bowie, Texas.



A man with heart a
a horse with heart ma
a well-nigh unbeatab
combination. So it wa
with the Nez Perce an
the Appaloosa—the grea

By L

Photos Courte

Above, Equavo B., a fine example of an Appaloosa stallion. Below, Cal Briley and his Appaloosa, High Eagle. Briley, a devoted Appaloosa breeder, also designs Indian costumes.

IT WAS September, the month of the hunting moon, when Lewis and Clark's Expedition rode onto Weippe Prairie. The friendliness of Chief Twisted Hair and his Nez Percé band made a lasting impression on the trail-weary explorers.

In welcome, the squaws prepared a delicious feast of service-berry cakes, buffalo steaks, baked blueback salmon and roast fawn cooked with wild onions and carrots. As the meal drew to a close, the Nez Percé braves entertained their guests by performing tribal dances and for a final treat, gave a dazzling display of horsemanship on their superb Appaloosas. The performance of these beautiful horses filled the explorers with amazement. The journals of Lewis and Clark later averred, "These Nez Percé horses are far superior to the best horses in Virginia."

How had uncivilized redmen developed such magnificent animals? Lewis and Clark's men probably didn't get a satisfactory answer to their question in 1806. But a look into the history of the Appaloosa can fill in the details today.

The horse was not known by the name "Appaloosa" until eighty years ago. They were called "Palouse" by early settlers. Charlie Russell, the famous artist, first spelled the word "Appaloosies" and later it evolved into the present spelling.

The spotted horse was first recorded 2,400 years ago by pictures in French caves. In Persia the breed was reserved for royal use. King Xerxes, in 480 B.C., made it unlawful for a commoner to own or even use an Appaloosa.

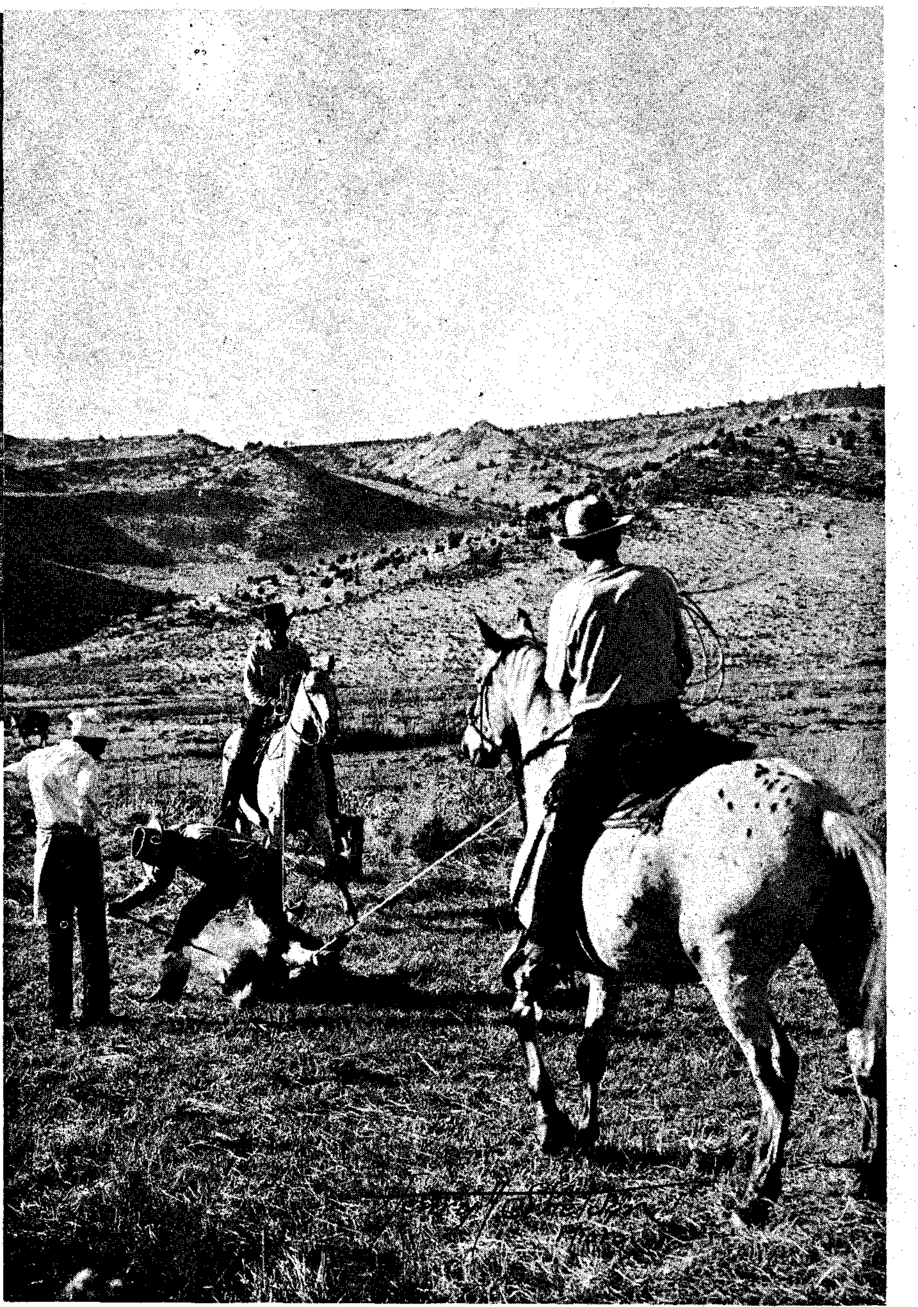
In 101 B.C. Emperor Wu Ti of the Han Dynasty of China fought a long and bloody battle with the Wasuns of Ferghana over the right to own and raise Appaloosas. (Wu Ti was so impressed with the intelligence and beauty of the spotted horses he wrote a poem about them. And to make sure everyone in China learned of his new possessions, the Emperor ordered his artists to draw and sculpture the "Heavenly Horses from the Extreme West.")

Drawings and ornate tapestries show the horses in Russia, Austria, Germany, England and The Netherlands. Later they

Spotted Horse of the West

YLAND

ppaloosa Horse Club



Modern day Appaloosas at work in the cattle country of Burns, Oregon.

were exported from Trieste to the little village of Chihuahua in Mexico.

Through migration, theft and trade, the Appaloosa found its way into Nez Percé country (Washington, Oregon and Idaho) in 1730, and the honor of developing the Appaloosa into the greatest horse in the West (as the animal was known in early settler days) goes to that tribe.

Christian-like in their ethics and above average in intelligence, they handled their spotted mounts accordingly. No other Indian had as intense affection for his horses as did the Nez Percé. A warrior was never known to willfully beat, starve or mistreat his Appaloosa. The spotted horse returned this kindness with steadfast loyalty.

THE THEORY, "Breed the best to the best and hope for the best," was quickly learned. Stallions which did not meet strict standards were gelded and unsuitable mares were kept barren. Gradually, the Nez Percé developed a horse of fine conformation and bright color pattern, but it didn't stop there. Before they acquired their spotted horses, they had done their hunting on foot. Fish had been their staple food although an occasional deer or elk fell to their arrows. After they became "horse" Indians, there was a yearly trek into Montana to hunt and their Appaloosas became top "buffalo" horses.

Speed, endurance and courage were required for a buffalo hunt. To test a horse for the chase, the Nez Percé rode out to a herd grazing on the prairie. With a wild whoop, he startled the buffaloes into running. Waiting until the animals were about a quarter of a mile ahead, he spurred his horse to a full gallop and the chase was on.

The object of the chase was to catch the buffalo in less than two miles. It takes real speed to make up a quarter-mile handicap but the Nez Percé succeeded in developing a horse which could do just that!

The next trial was for "depth of heart." A horse needed an inborn sense of courage to tackle anything as frightening as a herd of angry, bellowing buffaloes. An Appaloosa was expected to press close enough for his rider to touch the animal with a moccasined toe, and seldom did the Appaloosa disappoint him.

Often when the Nez Percé weren't hunting, they spent their leisure time racing; the popular distance was fifteen miles with no rules. The rough prairie on which the contests were held helped promote the sure-footedness of the Appaloosa. A "tangle-foot" had no place in the Nez Percé remuda.

A great deal has been written about the Nez Percé and their battles with the United States Army. They rode and fought circles around the pride of the cavalry, holding many white soldiers at bay with merely a handful of warriors. In reporting these facts, historians have given credit to the Nez Percé for their wily military tactics and courageous behavior. This is as it should be. The historians were writing specifically of Indians, not of their horses.

It was not until a professor of history at Oregon College of Education, Dr. Francis Haines, made an exhaustive and complete research that the spotted horse's part in the destiny of the remarkable Nez Percé came to light.

THE TRIBE was actually pushed into revolt as treaty after treaty was broken over their right to roam as a free people. Many white men who came in contact with the Nez Percé envied the Indians' outstanding horses. To missionaries like Henry Spalding, the horses were a tempting product of the devil; to Indian agents like John Monteith, the horses were simply too good for heathen redmen to own. He felt the Appaloosas made the Nez Percé hard to handle and less subservient than they should be.

The Appaloosas carried the Nez Perce over treacherous ground around which cavalry mounts had to detour. Skimpy rations and scarcity of water made little

(Continued on page 72)

Joe Welch

ME

By

JOE

WELCH

**..THE TROUBLE WITH ELMER WAS,
HE DIDN'T GIVE A DAMN.
HE'D SPEND ALL NIGHT SIGHTSEEING
AND STILL EXPECT TO RIDE THOSE
MONEYMAKIN' BRONCS THE FOLLOWING DAY.**

I WAS riding before I can remember and, by the time I was ten, was working as a wrangler for neighboring ranchers. That was just ordinary routine for a ranch boy in our country. Elmer Hepler (whose father owned a big ranch in the Guadalupes) and I worked together for Morg Livingston, my mother's brother.

Somebody told us about Bill Pickett, who introduced bulldogging at Juarez in the early 1900s. He tackled a fighting bull at Juarez by diving from his horse and grabbing its horns. He used the leg hold, still popular. When he got the bull almost to his knees, he caught the critter's nose in his teeth and brought him to the ground. It sounds easy—until you try it!

Elmer was always riding broncs and wild bulls and I practiced roping and bulldogging. I'd never seen it done but I experimented. First of all it required a good horse. There were many wild ones on the plains—so many they were a nuisance. Among them I spotted a bay that looked like he'd make a real cow pony.

I named him Plaino, and planned various means for trapping him. We put salt into an old corral and waited patiently for the bay's wild bunch to go to it. Eventually they did, with Plaino bringing up the rear, nipping the heels of the stragglers. Just as I thought, he had never been branded. Well, I did that just as soon as I got a rope on him.

Then I set about training him. Many people think that some horses are mean, like some people. Well, human beings may be born that way, but a horse isn't until he's been abused. I never abused Plaino. He got to know more about roping than I did and couldn't be topped when it came to bulldogging.

The ranchers in our country were prosperous before the drought struck in 1923. The price of cattle went down and down. Those who took their losses that year were lucky, for most of them managed to salvage their land and some of their cattle.

Others borrowed in the hope that rain would come, but the situation got steadily worse. Uncle Morg, who owned the bank in Carlsbad, continued to give credit for he knew his neighbors.

Many of the best cow outfits went broke but my father tided through by getting only one loan and by sacrificing most of his land and all but a few of his cattle. By the most rigid economy, he managed to hang onto thirty sections of land and 100 cows. Everybody was poor so nobody minded it so long as they could eat. But even that became a problem. Many would have gone hungry without beef. Everybody planted some frijoles and onions. Many went for weeks without coffee or sugar.

There was no grass for the cattle and no possibility of borrowing money for feed. A hundred dollars and a ton of cake would have looked like a fortune. People quit buying clothing. They went without kerosene. The only time they really needed it was when they got up at four in the morning; by nightfall they were ready to go to bed.

My older brothers got out and rustled whatever job they could get while Father and Mother stuck to the ranch. Me and Elmer had competed in local contests, largely for the fun of it. The need for cash was so pressing that we began making the rodeos. They paid little, but sometimes very little was the difference between losing property or keeping it.

For bronc riding and bull riding, Elmer

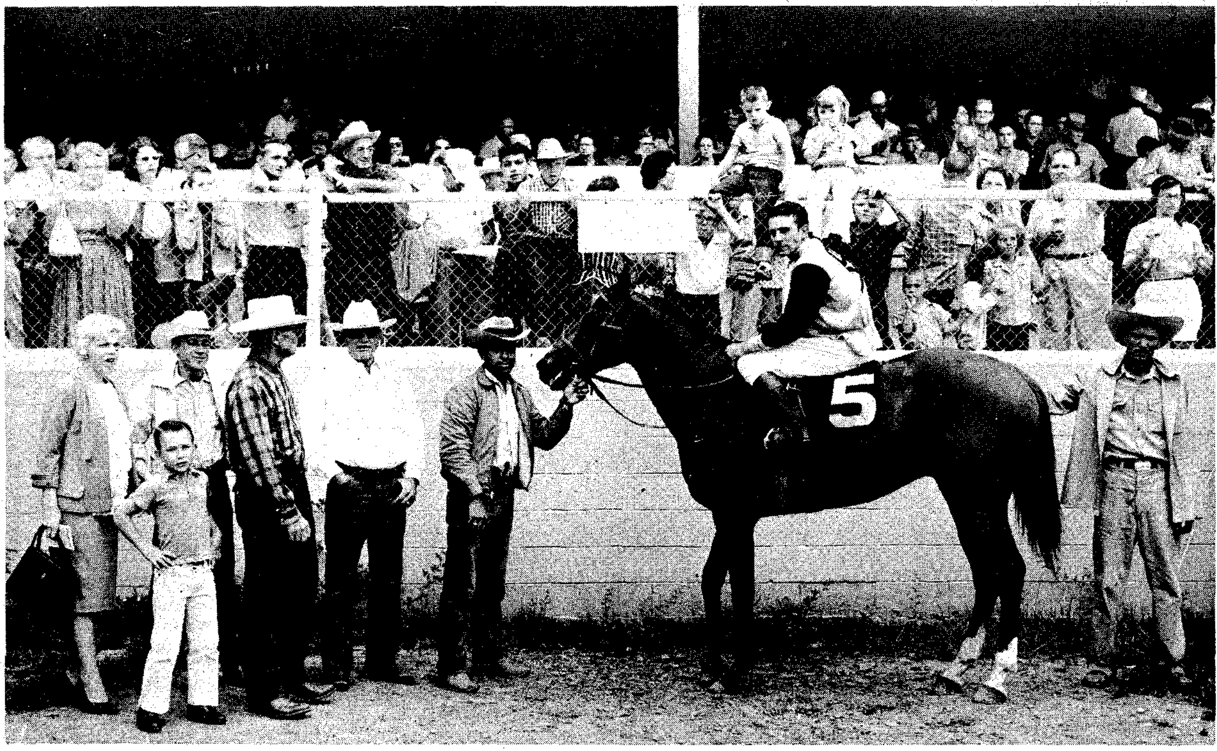
AND ELMER

Hepler did not need a mount but I had to take one. I rode Plaino and we took a pack horse. Elmer, of course, rode too, but one pack horse was sufficient for our bedrolls and camp outfit. To save expenses, we did our own cooking.

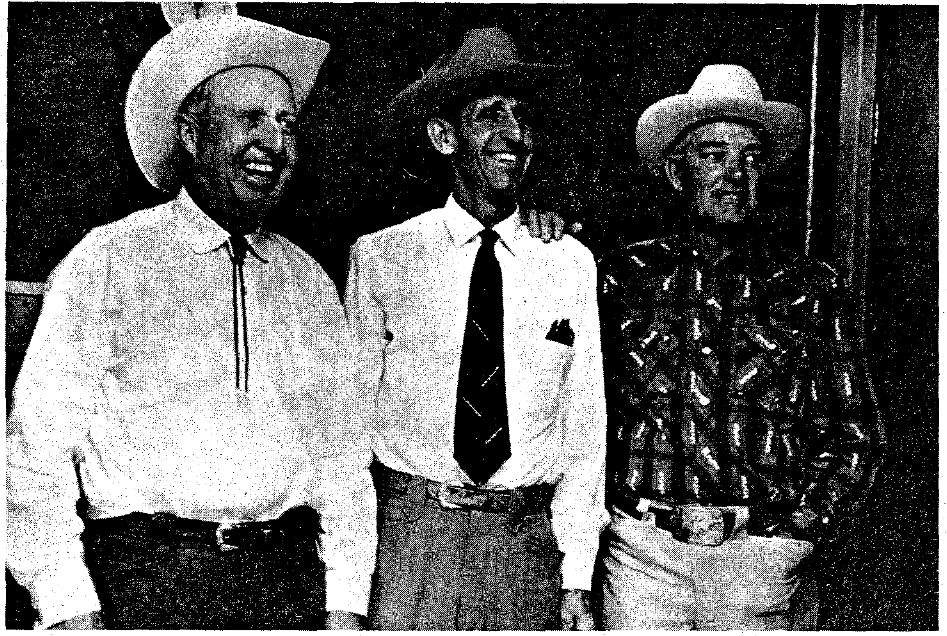
We sent part of our winnings—usually only $5.00 to $15.00—home. It meant a great deal to our parents for both families were determined not to ask for credit. Above all, my father would not ask Uncle Morg for credit for he knew what difficulties the bank was having. Finally his bank closed anyway as did most in our section of the state.

THEN WE got a lucky break! We were hired by Cherokee Hammond's Wild West Show for $25.00 a week, each. Twenty-five dollars! We got our meals and a place to sleep so we planned to send home most of our wages. It was enough to pay taxes and interest, and that meant hanging on to the ranches.

The show made one-night stands all over east and south Texas. It was hard work for the moves were often made at night after the evening performance and the men got little sleep. As it turned out, we got paid infrequently and Elmer went



Joe Welch has trained many winners, including Copper Array, shown below.



These three veterans of many rodeos are, left to right, Elmer, Richard Merchant, and Joe Welch.

home in disgust, but I stayed on another month.

When I got back to Carlsbad I learned that he had gone to California to help harvest a walnut crop near Los Angeles. He wrote for me to come—and I went, riding Plaino and leading a pack horse. The work was, of course, seasonal, but it paid well while it lasted.

When we learned that the 101 Wild West Show was on location in Hollywood, we went around the big tent where the bowlegs had their headquarters and asked for the boss. There were about twenty-five cowboys and a hundred Indians in the tent. They said for us to see Scout Nash, chief of the cowboys. He looked me over and said I was a little young—looked at Elmer and shook his head. We said we'd like to try out.

"It's this way," Scout Nash explained, "We've got some real bucking horses and I am afraid you couldn't make it. But I'll tell you what I'll do—give you a seat on Crying Squaw for tonight's performance."

(I'd heard of the Squaw; she'd spilled many a good rider.)

That night he put Elmer on a bull and he made it. And by some lucky break I managed to stay on the Squaw till the pickup man got there. Nash put us both on the payroll and gave each a dukie book good for meals at the cook shack and on the trains. We were rich!

The 101 toured much of California and the large towns to Phoenix and Amarillo. In late winter they disbanded and we returned to the ranches.

In the spring of '26 me and Elmer took out for the Northwest in a Model T, pulling a trailer with Plaino and our camp outfit in it. For the greater part of the way the roads were just trails. We were short of money but reckless enough to stay in a hotel occasionally, especially if it were raining. When we reached Butte we didn't have enough money for supper. We looked around until we found a hotel that served meals and checked in. They let me hobble Plaino in the back yard and I fed him the last grain we had.

We had been winning consistently and consequently were not greatly concerned about being broke, at least not until we learned that there were eighty-six entries for the bronc riding the next morning. That meant no one would ride more than once. I was fairly well pleased with my schedule but worried when I learned that Elmer had drawn the toughest horse in the wild string, an outlaw called Will James. He hadn't been ridden for four years and Elmer wasn't up to snuff. He had a leg injury which still spooked him at times.

After supper Elmer announced that he was going out to see the town. Butte, of all towns!

"Don't you know you can't ride tomorrow if you do? And especially if you're going to tackle Will James! That's the worst horse you ever met up with."

"But this town, it's tough, and I don't aim to miss nothing. Don't know that we'll ever make Butte again."

"But we're flat broke!"

"Don't cost nothing to look. Come on."

I snorted and turned in. I was so mad at Elmer, I couldn't sleep sound. Every time I waked up, I'd think of what might happen to him the next day. One of us just had to make some money! There were taxes coming up—and interest. And Elmer's leg buggered. And Uncle Morg broke. And a hotel bill coming up. And old Plaino had to eat. And the mortgages—both of the ranches mortgaged. I couldn't rest a bit I was so worried.

IT WAS almost daylight when I started out to feed Plaino. I met Elmer coming in and was mad enough I wouldn't speak to him. I was still mad when the roping was announced and I missed my steer. I didn't even do any good at bulldogging, my long suit. It was all up to Elmer.

When he came out of the chute on Will James, I knew he wasn't going to make it. Even with a good seat it would have been doubtful but he was off balance and the horse knew it. But luck was with us—Will James struck a slick place and went to his knees, giving Elmer a chance to regain his seat. When the whistle blew, Elmer'd won first place and $450! That boy'd been lucky all his life and still is. But there's nobody gladder for him than I am.

The show was held in White City Stadium, London. At first we had crowds of 76,000 people, but the Humane Society thought the show cruel, especially for the bucking horses and the steers we bulldogged—even for the calves we roped. They would not permit us to throw the steers; instead, we had to take a ribbon off their backs that had been tied on with a string. The rowels of our spurs had to be covered with leather. Naturally, those requirements killed the show. The newspapers were so influenced by the Society that each morning headlines said, "Yankees, take the next boat home!"

We were not Yankees by any means. Nobody in the Southwest is a Yankee. We were not all Americans. This was an international event. The money was put up by the International Sportsman Club and was held in escrow in New York. So, although the show was a dud, the contestants were sure of being paid. We went right on with the schedule, and sometimes as many as sixteen cowboys would be tied for first in some events. Instead of a watch which registered 1/10th of a second, we had to use one registering 1/100th.

That night he spooked me about losing and insisted that I do the town with him. Hadn't I had convincing evidence as to the rewards of virtue? We hit some of the toughest joints and damndest fights I ever saw! Talk about Carlsbad being tough! Them miners are fightin' sons of bucks!

As Elmer predicted, next day we both won. I did well with my roping and took first in bulldogging, earning over $400. I sent half of it to my father.

The rodeo officials had scheduled an exhibition, featuring as a special attraction the bulldogging of a buffalo. I'd heard of a cowboy in Oklahoma, Dick Truett, who bulldogged them but I'd never seen it done.

I sat on old Plaino just outside the chute. The buffalo was snubbed inside and the contestant got him by the horns before he was released. The animal took him clear across the arena and into the fence before the cowboy could stop it. When he got it down, he had to skedaddle for it got up and charged him.

When two or three had narrowly escaped being gored by the buffalo, somebody started bantering me about trying it. I had won first money, hadn't I? And didn't they have buffaloes in New Mexico? Bulldogging from a horse, the man has the advantage of being in rapid motion when he grasps the horns. A buffalo, I decided, wasn't much bigger than some of those old three-year-old steers they unloaded on us. I told them if they'd let me try it cowboy style, from a horse, I'd give it a round.

They turned one loose and I threw him in eleven seconds flat. I had dreaded turning him loose, but he was as anxious to get back to the chute as I was and didn't bother me.

IN 1934 Elmer and I went to London with Tex Austen. From the States, he shipped the bareback and roping horses and also those used for bulldogging and trick riding. The cattle were sent from Canada, thus payment of duty was evaded. He chartered a boat for the stock, and the performers went on a regular steamer of the English Line. We embarked at Montreal and went down the St. Lawrence to land at South Wales.

The first time the Humane Society undertook to regulate the show, they went to Tex Austen and demanded that certain changes be made.

"Ladies, I am glad you came. I am just as opposed to cruelty to dumb animals as you are. Now, just what particular

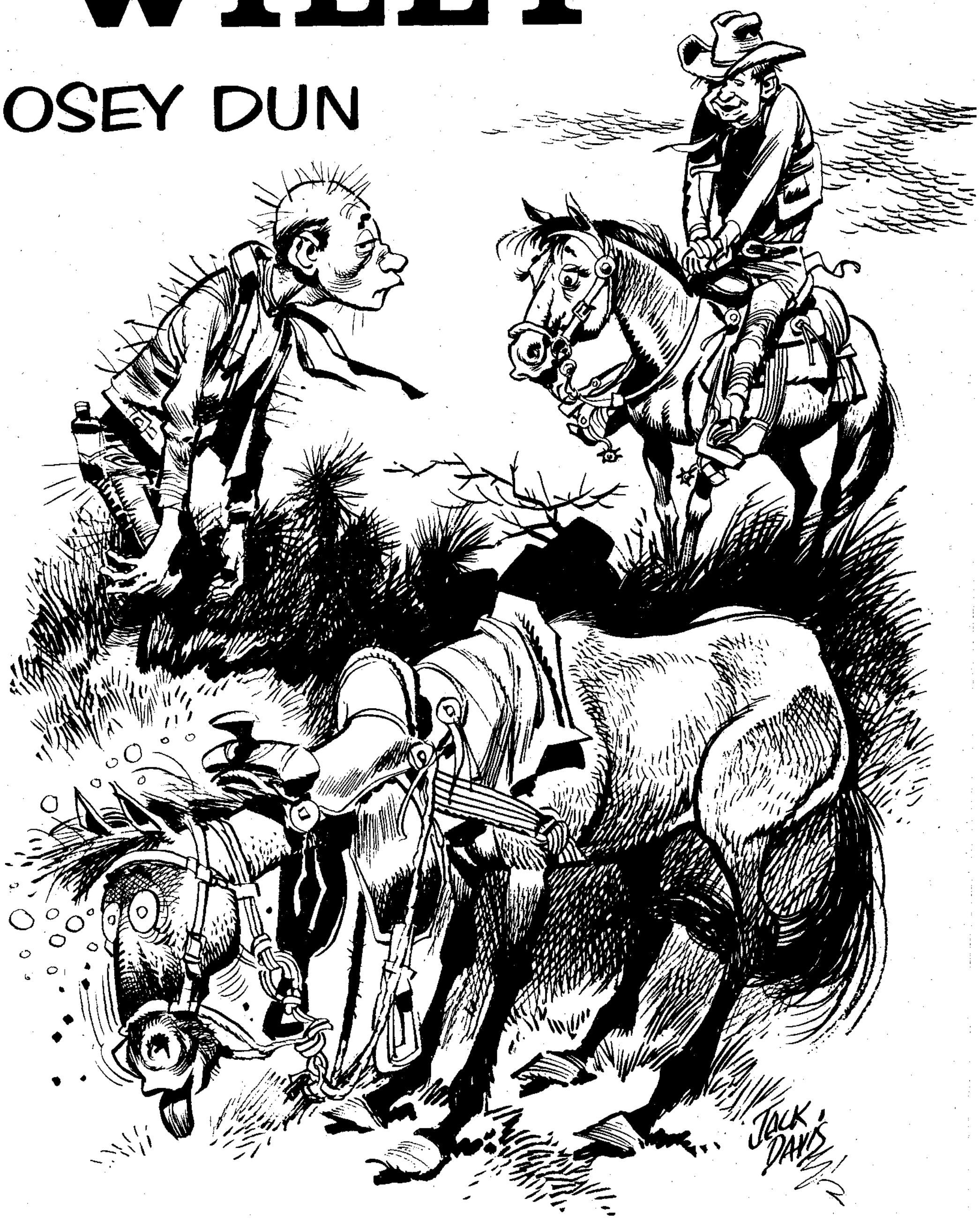
(Continued on page 72)

WEE WILLY

AND THE GOOSEY DUN

By FRED GIPSON

Illustrated by Jack Davis



Let him get around a little brave-making whiskey and Wee Willy was a wolf on horseback, ready to mount anything that wore hair.

A FRIEND of mine we'll call Dude, although that wasn't his name, used to ride for a cow outfit that operates on the Llano River near Mason, Texas. Dude liked to tell how a bronc-stomping neighbor of his made him late one time getting his wife into town where she had to attend some womenfolks' fancy social.

This neighbor went by the name of Wee Willy. Sober, he was known to shy away from riding bad horses. But let him get around a little brave-making whiskey and Wee Willy was a wolf on horseback, ready to mount anything that wore a mane.

On the day referred to, Wee Willy came riding up the river where Dude was chousing some cows out of a cornfield. The minute Wee Willy rode into sight, Dude knew his neighbor was tighter than a boiled owl. He was singing a lonesome song, and Wee Willy always sang lonesome songs when he was tight. He was mounted on a little three-year-old dun horse he'd been threatening to saddle-break for a couple of months but never had got around to saddling.

The dun was traveling at a crab walk, humping up under the saddle like he was afraid it might touch his back somewhere. Wee Willy sighted Dude and hauled the dun's head around with his hackamore rein and rode toward him.

"Hi!" he shouted, lifting his hat and waving it in greeting. "You thought I didn't have the guts to ride him, didn't you? Well, here I am, right up in his big middle!"

Dude told Wee Willy he'd known all along that he could ride the dun if he ever got enough Wild Lucy wine under his belt.

This hurt Wee Willy's feelings. He said he'd give Dude to understand that he didn't have to be drunk to ride a bronc, that he could ride 'em cold sober. And Dude agreed that he might—if he could ever make himself get on one.

"Well, I'm on one now," Wee Willy pointed out. "And done got the starch taken out of him. Look!"

Wee Willy whipped the dun over the head with his hat to prove that the starch was all taken out of him. The dun snorted and shied around a little under the hat-whipping, but he didn't fall to pieces like Dude was expecting.

"See," Wee Willy said. "I told you. Right now, I can do anything on him you can do on that horse you're riding." And he invited Dude to ride with him a piece and let him show him.

"Can't," Dude told Wee Willy. "Promised to take my wife to a social this evening. Done late now!"

DUDE reined his horse around and set out for the house, but he wasn't rid of Wee Willy and his dun bronc yet. The dun followed Dude's horse and no amount of cussing and spurring on Wee Willy's part could change his mind. Wee Willy would rear back on his hackamore rope till he had the dun's head pulled clear around and resting in his lap but he still couldn't change the dun's direction cf travel. The dun aimed to go wherever Dude's horse went.

This made Wee Willy nervous, even if he was drunk. "Now, you'll have to ride with me," he told Dude. "You'll have to lead me in home."

"But I tell you, I don't have time," Dude told him. "You're married. You know how it is when you don't get a woman to a social on time."

"But I can't turn him," Wee Willy pleaded. "How'll I ever get home if I can't turn him?"

Well, there wasn't but one answer to that, of course, so Dude swung his horse around and headed downriver. "We'll sure have to hurry," he said, and struck out at a fast clip, leading Wee Willy and his stubborn dun home.

Now that they were headed in the right direction, Wee Willy was happy again. He took a little nip from his bottle. He struck up another lonesome song. Then he broke the song off to tell Dude some more about what a wild-horse rider he was. Wasn't everybody, Wee Willy pointed out, that could take the fight out of a young horse the first saddling.

"Look!" he said. "There ain't a goosey place left on him!"

He felt around on the dun's neck and shoulders with his spurs, proving what he'd just said. He reached back and raked the dun some in the flanks.

At every touch of the spur, the dun

rolled his eyes and bent himself double, leaning away from those spur rowels. But he continued to point his nose right at the root of Dude's horse's tail and he never even broke his pace.

"See," Wee Willy said. "I told you there wasn't a goosey place left on him."

Dude tried to tell Wee Willy that if he kept on, he was liable to find a goosey place on that dun yet; but Wee Willy said he'd have to find it before he ever believed it.

They were getting pretty close to Wee Willy's house when it happened. Dude didn't see it, he just heard a sudden bawl and hoofs popping the rocks. He twisted in his saddle in time to see the dun hit the ground running.

The boogered bronc took out up a rocky slant like the dogs were after him, knocking holes in the brush where there weren't any. Wee Willy was down off one side. He still had one stirrup and was clinging to the cantle of his saddle with both hands. He was hollering "Whoa! Whoa, now!" But the dun wasn't listening.

They crashed into a leaning mesquite, hooked the saddlehorn in a fork and took the top of the mesquite along with them. The dun tried to duck the dragging brush and wheeled so suddenly that Wee Willy and the mesquite top dragged the saddle down off his withers.

That stopped the dun. He stood shaking all over, with the saddle so far down on his neck he couldn't raise his head.

Wee Willy backed out of a turkey-pear bush he'd dived into. He'd lost his hat the first jump back there, but the sun wasn't getting to his bald head any because it was now haired over with turkey-pear spines that stood up as stiff and straight as the bristles on a mad brush hog.

"Well," Dude said when he rode up, "I see you found that goosey place on him, all right!"

Dude got Wee Willy and the dun home without any more trouble to speak of, but it threw him late getting his wife to that social.

That, he claimed, was just as bad as he'd told Wee Willy it would be.

Me and Elmer

(Continued from page 70)

thing do you find objectionable?"

"Using bulldogs on those poor cattle, for one."

"Ladies, I am surprised! How could you ever have the idea we do that? I can assure you, upon my honor, that not a bulldog can be found on the lot. In fact, there are no dogs. All we do is a little wrestling, guaranteed to be far more dangerous to the men than the animals."

But they had no sympathy for the poor dumb cowboys who risked their lives to entertain the crowds.

IN SPITE of the dullness of the whole shebang, the Americans were entertained. The English received us in their homes in formal dress, but we went in our cowboy clothing, boots and all. If they found it unusual, they never batted an eye. I never saw such poker faces as those folks have.

We could not afford to return their hospitality in an expensive restaurant, so we killed some critters and made son-of-a-gun stew and baked some sourdough biscuits. There were the usual ranch-style frijoles, potato salad and peach cobbler, all served on tin plates with tin cups for the coffee. We had plenty of liquor but the amount they could dispose of amazed us—we hadn't anticipated that. We sang cowboy songs around a bonfire and some of the boys did some dances.

One lady there had sent to the States for material for a dress; it had many brands on it, most of which were familiar to us. Elmer looked her over and said, "Lady, you must have changed hands a lot of times," but she didn't get it.

Later me and Elmer made Madison Square Garden many times and did well until another knee injury forced him to give up riding in contests. After that he acted as judge at the Garden frequently and so did I.

When the "new look" was introduced in New York, somebody put on a fashion show and asked men supposedly familiar with artistic effects in color and line to judge it. They asked that the Garden send its best dressed cowboy and they picked me. As the models paraded on a runway, the judge was asked to tell whether or not he liked the costume and why. Nobody seemed able to do the latter.

When it came my turn, the lady wore a street costume. It was pretty long. I told them that I liked it.

"And do you have a reason for your choice?"

"Sure do," I said. "My gal's bowlegged!"

CANTINA
ragain

"Calling Jackass 18 . . . Calling Jackass 18 . . ."

ALWYN GIROD

"Why don't you learn to single foot like other horses?"

Spotted Horse of the West

(Continued from page 67)

difference to the Appaloosa's ability to travel fast. When they did tire, only a short rest was required and they were ready to move out again. Horses and their Indian owners had faith in each other.

Chief Joseph surrendered because the Nez Percé were tired of death and killing, and were heartsick over the condition of their beloved horses. The bright spots on the Appaloosas were barely perceptible through matted mud, briars and blood. The horses were pitifully thin but still moved with the quick, proud step typical of the strain today.

Confiscation of the Appaloosas by the Army was a bitter pill to the Indians but they were powerless to prevent it. Colonel Miles took the horse herds to Fort Keogh on the Yellowstone River where the best of the animals were kept for cavalry use. The remainder were advertised for sale at public auction. Horses that escaped the roundup and sale ran wild on the prairies.

The new owners let the Nez Perce horses decline by improper breeding. More interest was shown in seeing what color pattern could be developed than maintaining high standards of performance. Soon horses of all sizes and shapes—even mules—were sporting spots. It didn't take the white man long to undo all the fine qualities the Nez Percé had so carefully built up.

The proud Appaloosa became a forgotten breed, its history, reason for being and talents made nearly extinct. Only its color was remembered, for it was hard to subdue and became synonymous with "that funny little spotted horse the Nez Percé used to have."

But Nature has a way of preserving that which is truly good and after 2,400 years, she had no intention of letting the Appaloosas die out completely. On her side, working quietly and intelligently with an eye on the Appaloosas of old, honest breeders were bringing the spotted horse back to its rightful heritage.

In 1938 the Appaloosa Horse Club, a national organization dedicated to promoting the Appaloosas, was formed. Again the animal is being recognized for its true worth as a "using and doing" horse. Its speed, intelligence, disposition, everyday courage and stamina—qualities the Nez Percé painstakingly cultivated—are once more "showing" through the Appaloosa's famous spots.

Bob Tales

(Continued from page 64)

loose. 'Twas the damndest mess I ever seed!

"I run out and cut the lariat rope and that seemed to ease things up considerable. The hoss got up off his rider and the colt staggered back into the bunch of broncs. They made one last sashay up and down that pore feller's back and then run to the other end of the corral and stayed there.

"The boy was gittin' to his knees when I reached him, and I heerd him say, 'Tied rope . . . ride out. My daddy told me, but I couldn't get away in time . . .' then he keeled over.

"Come to find out, he was tryin' to say that his pappy told him always to git plumb out of the corral if a feller started ropin' with a tied rope. He'd tried to git out, but wasn't quick enough."

Jingle-Bob flipped away his cigarette butt. "That's another reason why I like this here rawhide rope. You can pitch it all away and git loose if somethin' pops up right sudden. Saves a feller many a hard fall and broken bones."

The veteran cowboy rubbed a rope-gnarled hand over a twisted, knotty knee and smiled. "Takes a feller a right smart while sometimes to learn that, though. I *know!*"

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7—Bronc to Breakfast, 15x8½
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